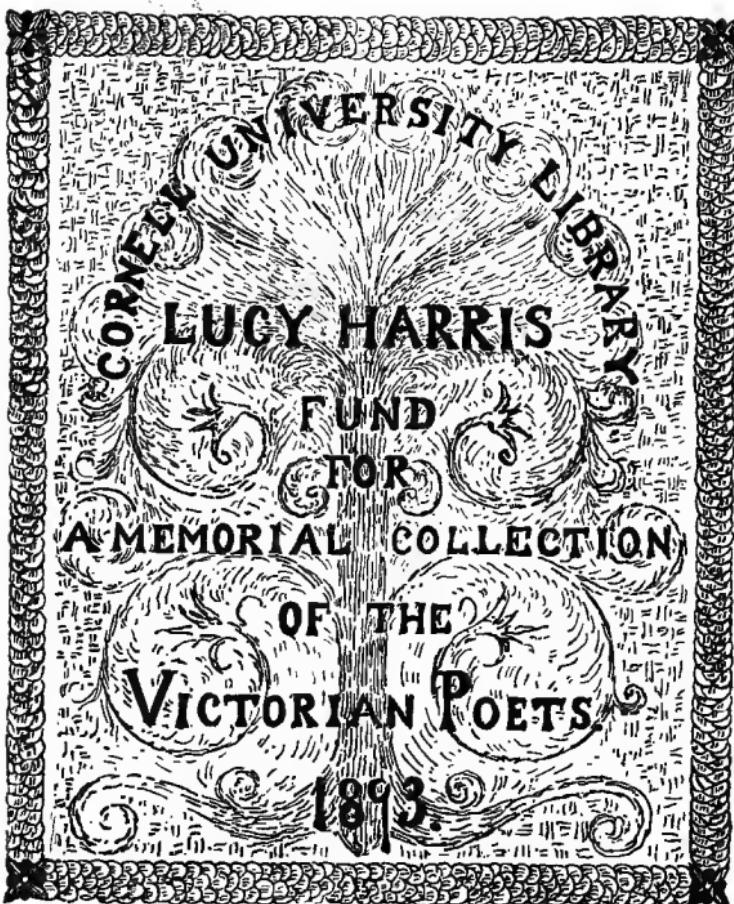


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THE WORN WEDDING-RING,
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Frances Hemmings
with all good wishes
THE
from W. Bennett
WORN WEDDING-RING,

And other Poems.

BY

W. C. BENNETT.

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TO

MY FRIEND,

H. M. TICKNOR.

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P O E M S.

THE WORN WEDDING-RING.

YOUR wedding-ring wears thin, dear wife; ah, summers
not a few,

Since I put it on your finger first, have pass'd o'er me
and you;

And, love, what changes we have seen—what cares and
pleasures too,

Since you became my own dear wife, when this old ring
was new.

O blessings on that happy day, the happiest of my life,
When, thanks to God, your low sweet “ Yes ” made you
my loving wife;

Your heart will say the same, I know; that day's as dear
to you,

That day that made me yours, dear wife, when this old
ring was new.

How well do I remember now your young sweet face that day:

How fair you were—how dear you were—my tongue could hardly say,

Nor how I doated on you; ah, how proud I was of you, But did I love you more than now, when this old ring was new !

No—no; no fairer were you then than at this hour to me,

And, dear as life to me this day, how could you dearer be ?

As sweet your face might be that day as now it is, 'tis true,

But did I know your heart as well when this old ring was new?

O partner of my gladness, wife, what care, what grief is there,

For me you would not bravely face, with me you would not share?

O what a weary want had every day, if wanting you, Wanting the love that God made mine when this old ring was new.

Years bring fresh links to bind us, wife— young voices that
are here,

Young faces round our fire that make their mother's yet
more dear,

Young, loving hearts, your care each day makes yet more
like to you,

More like the loving heart made mine when this old ring
was new.

And, bless'd be God! all He has given are with us yet;
around

Our table, every precious life lent to us, still is found ;
Though cares we've known, with hopeful hearts the worst
we've struggled through;

Bless'd be His name for all His love since this old ring
was new!

The past is dear; its sweetness still our memories treasure
yet;

The griefs we've borne, together borne, we would not now
forget;

Whatever, wife, the future brings, heart unto heart still
true,

We'll share as we have shared all else since this old ring
was new.

And if God spare us 'mongst our sons and daughters to
grow old,

We know His goodness will not let your heart or mine
grow cold ;

Your agēd eyes will see in mine all they've still shown to
you,

And mine in yours all they have seen since this old ring
was new.

And O, when death shall come at last to bid me to my rest,
May I die looking in those eyes, and resting on that breast;
O may my parting gaze be bless'd with the dear sight of
you,

Of those fond eyes—fond as they were when this old ring
was new.

FROM INDIA.

“ O come you from the Indies, and soldier can you tell
Aught of the gallant 90th, and who are safe and well?
O soldier, say my son is safe; for nothing else I care,
And you shall have a mother’s thanks—shall have a widow’s
prayer.”

“ O I’ve come from the Indies—I’ve just come from the
war;
And well I know the 90th, and gallant lads they are;
From colonel down to rank and file, I know my comrades
well,
And news I’ve brought for you, mother, your Robert bade
me tell.”

“ And do you know my Robert now? O tell me, tell me
true,

O soldier, tell me word for word all that he said to you,
His very words—my own boy’s words—O tell me every
one !

You little know how dear to his old mother is my son.”

“ Through Havelock’s fights and marches the 90th were
there ;

In all the gallant 90th did, your Robert did his share ;
Twice he went into Lucknow, untouch’d by steel or
ball,

And you may bless your God, old dame, that brought him
safe through all.”

“ O thanks unto the living God that heard his mother’s
prayer,

The widow’s cry that rose on high her only son to spare!
O bless’d be God, that turn’d from him the sword and shot
away!

And what to his old mother did my darling bid you say?”

“ Mother, he saved his colonel’s life, and bravely it was
done;

In the despatch they told it all, and named and praised
your son;

A medal and a pension’s his; good luck to him I say,
And he has not a comrade but will wish him well to-day.”

“ Now, soldier, blessings on your tongue; O husband,
that you knew

How well our boy pays me this day for all that I’ve gone
through,

All I have done and borne for him the long years since
you’re dead !

But, soldier, tell me how he look’d, and all my Robert said.”

“ He’s bronzed, and tann’d, and bearded, and you’d hardly
know him, dame,

We’ve made your boy into a man, but still his heart’s the
same;

For often, dame, his talk’s of you, and always to one tune,
But there, his ship is nearly home, and he’ll be with you
soon.”

“ O is he really coming home, and shall I really see
My boy again, my own boy, home; and when, when will
it be?

Did you say soon?”—“ Well, he is home; keep cool old
dame; he’s here.”

“ O Robert, my own blessëd boy!”—“ O mother—mother
dear!”

ENGLAND.

O ENGLAND, awe of earth, how great art thou!
Mother of nations, filler of the lands
With freemen, free-born, who is like to thee,
Or hath been? Egypt and the vanish'd rules
Of Asia swept the earth, but desert winds
That blasted races, and, death dealt, were gone,
Their records, ruins. Greece arose and lit
The dark with glory, but a falling star,
How bright, how fleeting! save that yet her thoughts,
Less mortal than her gods, illume us still.
Rome came and saw and conquered, crush'd and pass'd,
Smitten by freemen, she and all her slaves.
Gone are the thrones that the eternal sea
Heap'd riches on and empire—billows huge,

That roll'd, and roar'd, and burst upon her shores,
Tyre and the pomp of Sidon—Afric's boast,
Swart Carthage—Venice, and the ocean rules
Of Genoa and of Holland—all are gone.
Spain is the mock of nations once who shook
Even at the utterance of her iron name.
These and their glories are but mutter'd dreams
That by the past's dead lips are feebly told;
But we endure, we, sceptred heirs of power,
Victory and empire, fated to endure,
Gathering fresh might and glory through all time.
Our glory is our safeguard. Wall'd we stand
With mighty memories—buckler'd with bright fames;
Our present, still 'tis pillar'd on a past
That lifts it, glistening in time's marvelling gaze,
An awe and wonder to the trembling world.
Yes; were we aged—did our great life die out—
Were England palsied, as the nations are
That once knew greatness, phantoms of the past
Would rule earth for us, and the subject seas,
So long our tributaries, at the thought
Of what we have been, still would crouch and cringe,
And fawn upon our footstool; but, thank God!
Greatly we stand on greatness—rock-like, plant

Feet adamantine through the flow of time,
No muscle loosening; ever widening still
Stretch the broad bases that uprear our strength,
And thrust us skywards; the hot vines of Spain
Ripen beneath our shadow; the green world
The barks of Palos bared to Europe's gaze,
That is our children's heritage; the isles
That chafe the tropic billows feel our tread;
Lo, other Englands gather in the south,
And 'neath the glare of India we tread out
The bloody wrath that writhes beneath our heel,
And shield the maddening nations from themselves.
Where is the earthly air that has not borne
The record of our glory? What far race
But, naming greatness, to its children tells
Foremost our triumphs, all the mighty names
That are our greatness? For what land on earth,
Sceptred or crownless, can bid glory count
Hero for hero with us—fame for fame?
Earth boasts one HOMER; we, one yet more high,
SHAKESPEARE. If Florence hush her soul in awe,
Naming her DANTE, hell, and heaven's sweet air
Were breathed by MILTON. Who to wisdom taught
How to be wisest? BACON. NEWTON lived,

And God's dread secrets straight man wondering read,
And all the worlds revolved in order'd law.
WATT made the might of Nature's primal powers
Our toiling bondslaves. DRAKE and wandering Cook,
PARRY and PARK and all their fellows trod
Billow and land, and made them paths to man.
Look, knowledge lightens thought from land to land ;
That did our WHEATSTONE. Fame, to name our great,
Were weary ere the flaming roll were told,
And still she writes, what glories ! on the scroll,
Courage and wisdom kin to greatness gone,
Those that the blasting path to Lucknow trod,
And smote curst Delhi and its brood of hell,
HAVELOCK and LAWRENCE—names fit mates to those
Who broke the dusky ranks at Plassy first,
And far Assaye, and crush'd Ameer and Sikh
At Meeanee and red Ferozeshah,
And crowned our brows with empire. Crecy's fame,
And mailed Poictiers' and Agincourt's had heirs
In Blenheim and Corunna, and the fields
Of WELLINGTON—Vittoria and its peers,
And the wild, earth-felt shock of Waterloo.
O ye old sea-kings, to whom your tossed decks
Were thrones to rule the lands from, from you sprung,

In us lives on your scorn of all that pales
Weakness—in us your hunger of renown.
Sea-roamers—grapplers with the might of storms—
Stern trampers of the billows, fitting sons
To you were DRAKE and HAWKINS, and the hearts
That with fierce joy, for God and right, went forth
And wrapped the Armada—the Invincible—
In their red wrath, and whelm'd it in the deep.
Brother to you was he whom our proud lips
Name proudly—BLAKE, who, many a bloody day,
Grappled with Dutch VAN TROMP, and thundered down
The broadsides of DE RUYTER. Kin to you,
O ye old Norse hearts, who dared look on death
And greet him loud if victory with him came,
Were later glories. From your fierce veins sprang
The fiery blood of ROOKE, who gave La Hogue
To glory—MONK and SHOVEL—BENBOW—HAWKE—
DUNCAN of Camperdown—HOWE—RODNEY—he
Who at St. Vincent thunder-calmed the winds—
And of him, mightiest, whose fierce voice of war
Nile and the Dane heard, crouching—he who gave
To us the ocean's rule at Trafalgar.
So triumph grows to triumph. From the fire
Of by-gone fames we light the glories up

That sun the present. Oh, should danger threat,
New vauntings front us, and the shock of war,
In the red smoke of battle shall we feel
The awful presence of our living dead,
Steeling our hearts to conquer. Hellas heard,
At Marathon, and Salamis, heard clear
The roar of Ares, and the hero shout
Of Ajax pouring flight amid her foe.
The stern dead DOUGLAS won at Otterbourne ;
So WELLINGTON our charging ranks shall hurl
Through future triumphs ; through all coming time
Shall foes' masts crash and struck flags flutter down,
We conquering in the thought we can but win
Whose blood is NELSON's. Nor is fame alone
The bulwark of our greatness. Strong we stand
In surer strength that fates us not to fall ;
For we have breathed the breath that knows not death,
Hers in whose might we dread not the decay
That palsies nations. At the mighty breast
Of Freedom were we nurtured. At her knee
Have we drunk in the mighty lore that gives
To nations immortality and youth
Eternal. To our hands she gave the spell
That masters monarchs. From her lips were caught

The charging cheer of Edgehill, and the shout
That at red Naseby thundered down her foes.
Strong in her strength, we strengthen—conquering
And still to conquer, while we do her will.
Us does she gift with wisdom. We are wise
In Courts and counsels—all that builds up States,
And from the clash of thought do we shock out
Fit light to walk by—truths, by which we walk
More and more wisely; but, O island home
Of freemen, thee a future beckons on,
Lit with a glory thou hast never known,
And great with greatness that for thee shall be.
Lo, thou hast walked in sunlight that is night
Seen by the radiance of that perfect day.
Then shall thy homes know wisdom. Not a hearth
But thou shalt ring with knowledge, as a right
Dealt to thy children—to thy sons reared up
Fitly, self-ruled, to share, ungrudged, thy rule,
And walk the ways of greatness, wide to all.
Theirs shall be all the victories of peace,
The piercing eyes to whose all-fearless gaze
Nature gives up her secrets—Art reveals
Unrobed her beauties; theirs the ears that hear
That voice divine that unto slavish ears

Speaks not—that breathing of the airs of heaven
That the high Muse's lips give forth through man.
Then, mighty mother, then thy eagle brood
All shalt thou train to front the cloudless sun
Of blasting glory with strong eyes that drink
Its glare unshrinking, scaling with strong wing
Height beyond giddy height of fame's bright air
To seats of Gods and regions of the stars,
Where dwell the immortals wise in rule to man
And guidance godlike, there in light to dwell,
An awe and gladness to the eyes of earth.
O England, might that future now be thine !
Then shall the fulness of thy greatness be—
In war, in peace, the fulness of thy fame.
Then shall a race, how godlike ! walk thy ways,
Eating of fruit, forbidden now—the fruit
Of knowledge, making men like unto Gods,
Knowing of good and evil—good, to embrace—
Ill, shun—that earth may liker grow to heaven,
That heaven's full blessedness on earth may be,
That the all-righteous reign of love may come,
Of right and peace, that wrong may be no more.
So great thou art ; so greater shalt thou grow,
Doing the will of Him who bade thee be .

Foremost amongst the nations. Know thou right,
And do it. Be thy future, as thy past,
Built to His glory. On His awful breath
Are rule and empire. At His word they rise,
They pass, So walk thou, that He be thy staff
In this thy journey onward—that thou be
The earthly shadow of his power and love,
His strength and mercy—that thou lead the earth
Unto His altar-steps in whom thou art,
Thy strength and succour—that the nations see
How great are they who surely trust in Him,
And know thee for the chosen of thy God.

1858.

ADORATION.

UNUTTERABLE ! Thou whom thought
Dares not to strive to comprehend,
'Thou who no tongue hast ever taught
To breathe Thee, Nameless, as it ought,
Whose glories speech transcend,
Fitliest might silence, trembling, to Thee bow,
Yet would my soul in song soar to Thee now.

What art Thou ? Thee no mortal eyes
Have look'd on, even in holiest dream ;
Imagination, cowering, dies
Blind before Thee. Thought may not rise
To Thee, O Height Supreme !
How may the frail creation of Thy hand,
Thee, who created'st all things, understand ?

What art Thou? We poor things of breath,
We come and, even as dreams, depart;
Before time was, or earth, or death,
Eternal Now! Thought wondering saith,
“Thou wert as now Thou art.”
Thou know’st not time. Thou art Eternity—
That wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

What art Thou? Endless, boundless Power
Thou art — eternal, changeless Might—
Felt in the growth of fruit and flower,
In earth and ocean, sun and shower,
And all the worlds of night;
For blossom, insect, man and world are Thee,
Thou still in all that hath been — that shall be.

What art Thou? Wisdom, to the wise
Darkness; even as an unknown tongue
Is to a wondering infant’s eyes,
Thy mysteries are to him who tries
To read them. Who, among
The sons of men, Thy ways may comprehend,
Thou, of all things the Ruler, Source and End?

What art Thou? O how goodly fair
Is all around, beneath, above!
The shows of earth, and sea and air,
Day's glories, night's, alike declare
Thee boundless, changeless Love;
Sunrise and sunset, all the seasons see
Show forth the sumless goodness which is Thee.

Where art Thou? Who shall girdle round
Thy dwelling? Who but Thou shall dare
To span the limitless profound,
Systems and worlds that know no bound!
Yet ever everywhere,
Throughout all worlds, throughout all endless space,
As in all time, there is Thy dwelling-place.

Before all worlds Thou wast. Thy word
Throng'd the void depths of primal night
With suns. Thy breath the darkness stirr'd,
And the bright hosts of heaven were heard
Marching sublime in light
Through the appointed ways Thy will hath set,
Through which, adoring Thee, they thunder yet

Thou spak'st. Earth was. Half gloom, half light,
On its ordainèd pathway hurl'd,
Forth from Thy hand it wing'd its flight;
Perfect as now, good in Thy sight,
Through night, through day it whirl'd.
Thou breath'dst; plain, mountain, valley, desert came,
Pasture and field, Thy goodness to proclaim.

Thou willèd'st them; and, at Thy will,
Earth heard the voices of her seas,
Felt rivers their deep courses fill,
Felt forests shadow plain and hill,
Knew storm, and calm, and breeze;
And, at Thy breath, fed by Thy sun and showers,
Up-sprang the wonder of all herbs and flowers.

Then was all life. Thou bad'st them be;
And every breathing form came forth
That creeps the ground, or cleaves the sea,
Or wings the air — all beasts that flee
Man, from the icy north,
To the hot south; unnumber'd, at Thy call
They were; or huge, or small, Thou madest all.

Last, crown of all, Thy mercy bade,
Even from the dust, Thy creature rise.
Lord of all earth, Thy goodness made
Man, of Thyself the passing shade
Unto his fellows' eyes;
Him did'st Thou gift with thought and speech, and raise
To the high power to feel, and tell Thy praise.

Her too Thou mad'st, man's fitting mate.
Woman, creation's boast and flower,
Awful with beauty, on which wait
Reverence and love, Thou didst create,
With subtlest, sweetest power
To soften man, and bid him in her see
What wondrous cause for love and praise to Thee!

Nor stay'd from blessing us each day
Is Thy still re-creating hand;
Still Thou re-givest all decay
Withdraws; all that death bears away
Re-lives at Thy command;
Fair now as when it first was at Thy call,
Creation bids us bless Thee still for all.

Thy rains and dews with greenness fill
The earth. Thy snows still bear the spring;
Thou paintest flowers on plain and hill;
Thou bid'st Thy autumns to us still
Fruits and their harvests bring;
Sunshine and shadow, wind, and cloud, and sky,
Thunder and storm, Thee ever glorify.

O let all praise Thee! Let all lands
Thy wondrousness, Thy blessings tell,
More countless than the ocean's sands!
Let my soul praise Thee, from Whose hands
Is every good, and swell
With song creation's everlasting hymn
Unto Thy glory, by Whom suns are dim.

Me Thou hast given Thy works to see
With heart that feels in all Thou art
Beyond man's thought. What love may be,
What praise an offering unto Thee,
All-wise, that shall impart
The awe with which I fling my soul before
Thy power, and wonder, tremble, and adore.

Creator, Saviour, God, Thy will
 Made me. Thy will from woe and death
 Upholds me. Lord, give to me still
 Thy law to know, and to fulfil ;
 Make Thou my every breath,
 My every act, word, thought, and moment be
 A hymn of thanks, praise, worship, unto Thee !

Live Thou in me ! Lord, what am I,
 But as a leaf borne on Thy breath ?
 From Thee, all thoughts are born and die ;
 All good, all griefs that purify,
 From Thee have birth and death ;
 By Thee the knowledge and the strength are given
 By which to know and serve Thee we have striven.

O Thou, All-good, make Thou my will
 Even as Thou would'st my life should be !
 Make pure my heart, that it may fill
 My days with deeds and thoughts, that still
 Are blameless unto Thee !
 O Lord, through life, through death, to Thee I cry ;
 Be Thou my strength, my hope, eternally !

THE GREEN HILLS OF SURREY.

AN EMIGRANT SONG.

O FROM Box Hill and Leith Hill the prospects are fair,
You look o'er the sweet vales of green Surrey there,
And, than Surrey's dear green vales, you never saw lie,
Or sweeter or greener, beneath the blue sky;
O the green hills of Surrey, the sweet hills of Surrey,
The dear hills of Surrey I'll love till I die.

O Farnham, green Farnham, what hop-grounds are there
That with Farnham's fair hop-grounds can ever compare!
And what pleasure it were once again but to lie
On Guildford's green hill-sides beneath the blue sky !
O the green hills of Surrey, the sweet hills of Surrey,
The dear hills of Surrey I'll love till I die.

O Dorking is pleasant, and Dorking is green,
And sweet are the woods and the walks of Deepdene,
But for Dorking's sweet meadows in vain I must sigh,
And Deepdene's green woods will no more meet my eye;
But the green woods of Surrey, the sweet woods of Surrey,
The dear woods of Surrey I'll love till I die.

O Kent has fair orchards; no pleasanter show
Than her apple-trees blooming in April, I know,
Save the orchards 'round Reigate, sweet Reigate, that lie
With their red and white blossoms so fair 'neath the sky.
O the green fields of Surrey, the sweet fields of Surrey,
The dear fields of Surrey I'll love till I die.

O Surrey, green Surrey, that I had been born
To a farm 'mongst your fields, with its hops and its corn
That I'd not been forced far, my fortune to try
Across the wide sea, 'neath a far foreign sky;
O the green vales of Surrey, the sweet vales of Surrey,
The dear vales of Surrey I'll love till I die.

Minnesota's green prairies have plenty for all,
And comfort and wealth here my own I can call,
Yet often and often my thoughts, with a sigh,
Far to Surrey's green hills, o'er the wide sea will fly ;
O the green hills of Surrey, the sweet hills of Surrey,
The dear hills of Surrey I'll love till I die.

But sighing avails not, and wishing is vain,
And the home of my childhood I'll ne'er see again ;
The acres my labour's made mine here, I'll try
To make dear to my heart, as they're fair to my eye ;
But the green hills of Surrey, the sweet hills of Surrey,
The dear hills of Surrey I'll love till I die.

'Neath the park limes in Betchworth, 'tis there I would stroll ;
O to walk but once more by the clear winding Mole ! . . .
But no more shall I hear the soft breeze rustle by
Through those lime-tops, no more by the Mole I shall lie ;
But the clear streams of Surrey, the sweet streams of Surrey
The dear streams of Surrey I'll love till I die.

By the gray ivied church, where my father is laid,
Where my mother lies with him, my grave should be made,
But, far from them, my bones, when my time comes, must
lie

'Neath the rain and the snow of a strange foreign sky;
O the green hills of Surrey, the sweet vales of Surrey,
The dear fields of Surrey I'll love till I die.

O BONNY IS MY HUSBAND'S SHIP.

O BONNY is my husband's ship, the ship that well I love;
And welcome are its coming sails, all welcome sights above.
There's not a tarry rope, not a spar that there I see,
Not a deck-plank that he treads on, but it's O how dear
to me!

O bright, bright was the May-time through which he
sail'd away,

But to me more wan and dreary than November was the
day.

O wintry winds beat keen with sleet—O cold seas rage
and foam,

But calm will be, and bright to me, the day that brings
him home,

O Katie, playing on the floor—O Jock, beside my knee—
When father sits beside the fire, how happy we shall be !
O babe unborn that, when he comes, shall bless my happy
breast,

God send my baby safe to me, to kiss him with the rest.

And many a pretty thing he'll bring for little Kate and
Jock,

Carved wooden man, and funny beast, and shell, and spark-
ling rock,

A monkey, perhaps, so clever, with Jock and Kate to play,
And a rainbow-colour'd parrot, that will chatter all the day.

O never be a sailor, Jock, to make the angry foam
The terror of a loving wife and babes you've left at home :
And marry not a sailor, Kate, to be his weary wife,
Unless you get one dear as he who's dear to me as life.

Move swiftly on, you lonesome hours ! tick quicker on,
O clock !

And bring the hour when, at my breast, my baby I shall
rock ;

When in my arms my blessed babe shall laugh and leap
and crow,

And I shall teach its little eyes its father's face to know.

O Thou who guid'st the stormy winds, O Thou who rul'st
the sea,

O God look down in mercy upon my babes and me;
Through storms and perils of the deep, O hold him in Thy
hand,

That we may bless Thy blessëd name, when safe he treads
the strand.

Wives who are blessed with plenty, how little do you
know

The blessings that, on such as I, your riches would bestow!
O John, come back with half enough to keep you safe
ashore,

And day and night I'll work that you may go to sea no
more.

HOME AGAIN.

A SOLDIER'S WIFE'S SONG.

And O, but he's come home again,
Home, home, home again;
And O, but he's come home again,
My husband dear, to me !

'Twas only yesternight I knew
The news—they broke it first to Sue,
And I—I said, “Can it be true,
And is my husband home again !”
And O, but he's come home again,
Home, home, home again;
And O, but he's come home again,
My husband dear, to me !

Ah, but it seems long weary years,
My twenty months of heart-sick fears,
Of nights I've wet my cheeks with tears,
To think, will he come home again ?
And O, but he's come home again,
Home, home, home again ;
And O, but he's come home again,
My husband dear, to me !

Ah, when upon his neck I hung,
While to his breast like life I clung,
I mind me well his angel tongue
Said, " Wife, but I'll come home again."
And O, but he's come home again,
Home, home, home again ;
And O, but he's come home again,
My husband dear, to me !

O, sore have ached both heart and head !
How have I shivered as they read
The lists of wounded and of dead !
Ah, would he—he come home again !
And O, but he's come home again,
Home, home, home again ;
And oh, but he's come home again,
My husband dear, to me !

O with what sighs is glory bought !
O why must battles e'er be fought ?
O would kings give to wives a thought,
 Who wish their husbands home again !
And O, but he's come home again,
 Home, home, home again ;
And O, but he's come home again,
 My husband dear, to me !

But now, why speak of sorrow more ?
His ship lies rocking at the Nore ;
Two hours, and he will be ashore
 Whom I've so pray'd for home again.
And O, but he's come home again,
 Home, home, home again ;
And O, but he's come home again,
 My husband dear, to me !

O bless'd be God ! the prayers I pray'd,
The wild, wild words to heaven I said,
Were heard ! O God, had he been dead,
 My husband, who is home again !
And O, but he's come home again,
 Home, home, home again ;
And O, but he's come home again,
 My husband dear, to me !

For ever will I thank kind heaven
That gives the gift for which I've striven,
By whom to these glad arms is given

My husband who is home again !

And O, but he's come home again.

Home, home, home again ;

And O, but he's come home again,

My husband dear, to me !

No more, no more, to part no more !

O bless'd be God ! the war is o'er !

O hours fly by, till he's ashore,

My husband, who is home again !

And O, but he's come home again,

Home, home, home again ;

And O, but he's come home again,

My husband dear, to me !

A THOUSAND LEAGUES AWAY.

A SEA SONG.

THE wind is blowing fresh, Kate—the boat rocks there for
me;

One kiss and I'm away, coz, for two long years to sea;
For two long years to think of you—dream of you night
and day—

To long for you across the sea—a thousand leagues away,
A thousand leagues away, dear coz,
A thousand leagues away,
While round the pole we toss and roll,
A thousand leagues away.

I half could be a landsman, Kate, while, coz, those eyes I
see,

To hear the gale rave by, without, while you sat snug with
me;

But I must hear the storm howl by, the salt breeze whistling play

Its weird sea-tune amongst the shrouds, a thousand leagues away,

A thousand leagues away, dear coz,

A thousand leagues away,

While south we go, blow high, blow low,

A thousand leagues away.

I'm too rough for a landsman's lot—his tame life's not for me;

What could I do ashore for you? my fortune's on the sea;

The mate of winds and billows still, I must my fate obey,
And chase the whale, before the gale, a thousand leagues away,

A thousand leagues away, dear coz,

A thousand leagues away,

The blubber boil, and stow the oil,

A thousand leagues away.

Something I have and more shall have, if luck my fortune be,

Enough at last a wife to keep and children round my knee;

And do you love me well enough, Kate, from your heart
to say,

“ I’m yours, though you must win me, Will, a thousand
leagues away,

A thousand leagues away, dear coz,

A thousand leagues away,

For you she’ll wait; go, win your Kate,

A thousand leagues away.”

One kiss ; the tide ebbs fast, love; I must no laggard be,
Upon the voyage I’ll hope, coz, will give a wife to me.
Pray for us, Kate; such prayers as yours God bids the
winds obey;

By fortune heard, your loving word will speed us far away,

A thousand leagues away, my love,

A thousand leagues away,

God will befriend the lad you send

A thousand leagues away.

HOW PLEASANT IS THE FARMER'S LIFE.

How pleasant is the farmer's life! away from smoky
towns

He breathes the pleasant country air of meadows, hills and
downs,

And with a hale, old hearty age a healthy life he crowns;
And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

No prison'd life the farmer lives, bent over desk and
book,

Or cribb'd within a shop all day, till white and wan's his
look,

Till less like to a man he grows, and weaker than our
Suke;

And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

As to your white-faced tradesman who fawns and smirks
and smiles,

Who cannot whirl a flail, boys, or walk a score of miles,
What is his life to ours, we who leap the gates and
stiles;

And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

Our arms are strong with labour, our cheeks are red with
health,

We never gain a penny'sworth by lying, trick or stealth,
Yet cowhouse, sty and stackyard, show we have our share
of wealth ;

And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

How pleasant is the Spring-time! 'tis then we plough and
sow,

And through the shining mornings, beside our teams we
go,

While in the fields the lambkins leap and frisk their joy to
show ;

And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

How pleasant is the Summer-time ! 'tis then we make our
hay,
And scythe and rake and fork and cart are busy all the day,
'Tis then we shear our bleating sheep with laugh and joke
and play ;
And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

Then comes the pleasant Autumn-time when sheaves are
reap'd and bound,
And, at our happy harvest-homes, the song and ale go
round,
And through the calm and quiet days our busy flails
resound ;
And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

And when our fields are stripp'd and bare, and white with
sleet and snow,
When work is done, beside the fire what merry nights we
know,
With Christmas cheer and New Year's games we set our
hearts aglow ;
And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

Then luck to all good farmers! God send them still, I say,
Good seasons, plenteous harvests, and all they want each
day,

Full barns, and folds and stackyards, and thankful hearts,
I pray;

And it's O I'd be a farmer—a farmer I would be.

MY OWN EASY CHAIR.

A FIRESIDE SONG.

WHEN business is done, and I home take my way,
To rest me at last from the cares of the day,
Fatigued—wearied out quite—what pleasure is there
In flinging me down in my own easy chair;

 O my own easy chair,
 My own cosy chair,
A friend I love well is my own easy chair.

From morning till evening—till night's coming down,
I'm busy at work without rest in the town,
Till body and brain no more labour can bear,
Till I thank God at home is my own easy chair;
 Then my own easy chair,
 My own cosy chair,
How welcome to me is my own easy chair.

In winter, as entering I shake off the snow,
In the fender my slippers are toasting, I know ;
And, fronting the bright blaze, I'm sure to see there,
In the full ruddy firelight, my own easy chair;
 O my own easy chair,
 My own cosy chair,
Still ready for me is my own easy chair.

What rest, when I'm quite to its comfort resign'd,
What gladness of ease in its old arms I find ;
To be tired right out is a joy I declare,
But to taste the full rest of my own easy chair;
 O my own easy chair,
 My own cosy chair,
What rest is like that in my own easy chair.

My bed is a blessing, for which God I bless,
But bed than one's own chair must comfort one less,
For, sleeping, one can't know how blest one is there,
The waking delight of my own easy chair;
 O my own easy chair,
 My own cosy chair,
How I feel the full rest of my own easy chair.

If I with the crosses of life am perplex'd,
If with men and their doings I'm worried and vex'd,
In its quiet I learn soon to bear and forbear,
And peace comes to me in my own easy chair;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

It whispers me peace, does my own easy chair.

But my chair's a confessor and counsellor too,
If a wrong I have done, or a wrong I would do,
Its quiet old voice not a failing will spare,
And wisdom I learn from my own easy chair;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

What preacher is like you, my own easy chair.

Round my chair, little faces, how dear ! come and go,
To get kisses—ask questions—their lessons to show,
And to puzzle their father, though sage I look there,
As if all things I knew in my own easy chair;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

Long may those faces throng round my own easy chair.

In my chair as I dream, there looks up from my knee
The face of an angel 'tis heaven to see,
Golden curls—azure eyes—baby's small voice is there,
Prattling up to my heart in my own easy chair ;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

God keep that small form by my own easy chair.

Then the boys, they are heard with their voices too high ;
Harold's loud in assertion—Will's shrill in reply—
And my voice must be raised, calming down the storm there,
The lawgiver speaks from my own easy chair;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

Is the judge over stern in my own easy chair?

Then Katie, or May, as night grows in the room,
With the sweetness of some dear old tune fills the gloom,
As she plays, through my brain steals its feeling till there
I could dream night away in my own easy chair ;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

What dreams come to me in my own easy chair !

Then rhymes come unbidden; as feeling grows strong,
Through head, lip, and pen, fancies hurry along,
And songs leap to birth, to some still voiceless air,
And a poet I seem in my own easy chair;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

The muse loves me well in my own easy chair.

O Emma, my good, true, my own darling wife,
Through the worst cares of day how it gladdens my life
To think that at evening your face will be there,
Looking love to me stretch'd in my own easy chair;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

How dear comes that voice to my own easy chair.

What memories cling to it! what thoughts of delights
Of past Christmas eves and of gone New-Year's nights,
Of faces we see not—shall only see where
We shall go when we're miss'd from our own easy chair;

O my own easy chair,

My own cosy chair,

Where they're gone, may I go from my own easy chair.

My gladness to gladden—my sorrow to cheer,
Still, old chair, be my friend while in life I am here,
Be my comforter still till all white is my hair,
Till death steals my form from my own easy chair;
 O my own easy chair,
 My own cosy chair,
One day we must part too, my own easy chair.

MOTHER AND SON.

“ MOTHER, the storm, how it shrieks without!”

“ Fit night for the work, son, we’re about.”

“ Mother, the razor’s smear’d with blood.”

“ Fling it far where the river comes down in flood.”

“ Blood on these hands, blood will be seen.”

“ Water, my son, will wash them clean.”

“ What will whiten the sheets and bed!”

“ I’ll wash them in peace now your father’s dead.”

“ They’ll see where the new-turn’d earth looks brown.”

“ Son, with my feet I trampled it down.”

“ O that dead face ! O hide it, night !”

“ The quick-lime I strew’d will soon eat that sight.”

“ God ! I can see his mangled throat !”

“ Silence, boy ! how you drivell and dote.”

“ Mother, his blood, it sears my soul !”

“ Son, on mine alone be the whole.”

“ O would my father were here again !”

“ Thank God ! that wish is wish’d in vain.”

“ Here, even to drive us mad with blows.”

“ Thank God ! from his heart his life-blood flows !”

“ Here, though, mad-drunk, to kill us he swore.”

“ Thank God ! such oaths he’ll swear no more.”

“ Here again, though he starved us dead.”

“ Thank God ! now my work will bring us bread.”

“ Here again, to repent his sin.”

“ Thank God ! to heaven never he’ll win.”

“ O that he were living, and dead were we !”

“ Sleep, sleep, my son, and comfort me.”

“ How dare I sleep ! how dare I dream !”

“ Without him, our lives like heaven will seem.”

“ Heaven !—hell, hell, is for you and me !”

“ God help us ! there will your father be !”

“ Hell hereafter ! hell here !” “ Forgot

“ Will be hell's pains if we're where he's not !”

BALLAD.

O THAT I were lying still in the grave cold and deep !
O waking it is weary and I fain, fain would sleep,
I fain, fain, would slumber and fain would have dreams
That true true, is friendship and love all it seems.

O false is the sea-wind and false, false the sea,
And false, false the friend, wind and wave brought to me;
O had he but seen Scotland's cliffs never more,
Or I never welcomed his false face to shore !

O bonny is the red rose, the red rose on the tree,
And bonny was one sweet face, one glad face to me,
But now sick I lie, sick to see it in vain,
And it's only in heaven I shall meet it again.

O weary's the world ! O how dear, O how dear
Was that fair gentle face I shall see no more here ;
And how sweet was the voice here I listen for still,
Though a word from those red lips my worn heart would
kill.

Accursed be the wind and wave, and cursed be the ship,
That brought to her young ears a word from his lip !
May its dark timbers grind and break upon a cruel shore,
That its false hammocks bring men such black freights
no more.

My curse on the false heart where'er it may be,
The cruel, cruel false heart that wiled her love from me ;
But blessings, blessings on her wherever she may be,
For, false or true, to me she's dear—she's dear, dear to me.

O love, it can cherish and love can stab and kill;
O happy was my heart once, but now it would be still ;
It now would be still in the grave dark and deep;
O death give me rest, for I fain, fain would sleep!

A SOLDIER AM I.

I'M a lad to war bred, who's proud to wear the red,
And this coat and this bearskin you see upon my head,
 By the Russians they were seen
 On the Alma's slopes of green,
And when Inkermann's grey hill-sides we heap'd high with
dead;
To fight is my trade, and I never am afraid
 For my queen, lads, to fight,—for my country to die ;
This medal at my breast and these clasps tell you best
 Where I've been—what I've seen, that a soldier am I.

O my grand-dad, before, the red coat he wore;
At Corunna long ago well he fought under Moore;
 On Salamancha's plain
 He beat the French again
And through Badajoz's breach, quick their best back he
bore;

Now he has a wooden peg, for at Quatre Bras a leg
A round shot took off, so he'll stump till he die;
At Chelsea, safe and snug, with his pipe and his mug,
He tells his old tales, and a soldier am I.

At the Cape in the bush with the Kaffirs I'd a brush ;
When Canton we storm'd, I went in with the crush ;
Under Campbell 'twas warm work,
But they never found me shirk,
And when Lucknow we took, I was first in the rush ;
Now I'm home safe and sound, though I've had many a
wound ;
This scar's not a beauty ; yet, as I pass them by,
Many a girl still I see looks a side-look at me ;
O they dearly love the red, and a soldier am I.

If you'd trust now to some, the French soon will come
To invade us at home here, but that's all a hum ;
Do you think that they'll come here
To meet a British cheer,
And to taste English steel to the sound of the drum ?

Should they have a whim some day to see us in that way,
We know, boys, they'll come to our shores but to die;
With Enfield and with steel, I for one will let them feel
That we're Englishmen yet—for a soldier am I.

THE PLEASANT FIELDS OF KENT.

AN EMIGRANT SONG.

O KENT's a pleasant country, and how heavy is his heart
Who from her breezy hills and downs and meadows must
depart,
Who across the heaving ocean to seek a home is sent,
Far, far from dear old England and the pleasant fields of
Kent.

Fair Surrey, it has grassy hills, and Berkshire's lanes are
green,
But of all the counties England holds, our Kent, it is the
queen ;
And never one of all her sons far from her ever went
Without a heavy heart to leave the pleasant fields of Kent.

Green Maidstone, it has orchards sweet, and Farleigh it has
hops,

And grassy fields by Medway's banks full many a white
sheep crops;

But from Maidstone's blooming orchards, and from
Farleigh's hop-fields sent,

I shall see no more the Medway flow through the green
fields of Kent !

O Lenham, it has pleasant woods ! dear to my heart are
they,

For there I've nutted, when a boy, full many an autumn
day ;

But nevermore a day by me will in Lenham's woods be
spent,

For I am sailing o'er the sea, far from the woods of Kent !

How pleasant are the Medway's banks—its waters flowing
clear,

And the cottage by its grassy side, where I dwelt for
many a year ;

But on far Australia's streamless plains my last years
must be spent,

Far from the Medway's pleasant side, and the winding
streams of Kent.

O Kent, the sigh is on my lip, the tear is in my eye,
To think no more my longing eyes will see you ere I die ;
Yet, with brave heart in my new land, I'll strive to win
content,
But often will my thought ^s be yours, O my own pleasant
Kent.

OUR OWN GREEN PLEASANT THAMES.

O MANY a river song has sung and dearer made the names
Of Tweed and Ayr and Nith and Doon, but who has sung
our Thames ?

And much green Kent and Oxfordshire and Middlesex it
shames
That they've not given long since one song to their own
noble Thames.

O clear are England's waters all, her rivers, streams and
rills,

Flowing stilly through her valleys lone and winding by
her hills,

But river, stream or rivulet through all her breadth who
names

For beauty and for pleasantness with our own pleasant
Thames.

The men of grassy Devonshire the Tamar well may
love,

And well may rocky Derbyshire be noisy of her Dove,
But with all their grassy beauty, nor Dove nor Tamar
shames,

Nor Wye, beneath her winding woods, our own green
pleasant Thames.

I care not if it rises in the Seven Wells' grassy springs,
Or at Thames'head whence the rushy Churn its gleaming
waters brings,

From the Cotswolds to the heaving Nore, our praise and
love it claims,

From the Isis' fount to the salt sea Nore, how pleasant is
the Thames !

O Gloucestershire and Wiltshire well its gleaming waters
love,

And Oxfordshire and Berkshire rank it all their streams
above ;

Nor Middlesex nor Essex nor Kent nor Surrey claims
A river equal in their love to their own noble Thames.

How many a brimming river swells its waters deep and
clear,

The Windrush and the Cherwell and the Thame to Dorset
dear,

The Kennet and the Loddon that have music in their
names,

But no grandeur like to that in yours, my own mast-
shadow'd Thames,

How many a city of renown beside its green course
stands!

How many a town of wealth and fame, how famous through
all lands!

Fair Oxford, pleasant Abingdon and Reading, world-known
names,

Crown'd Windsor, Hampton, Richmond, all add glory to
our Thames.

But what wide river through the world, though broad its
waters be,

A London with its might and wealth upon its banks shall
see!

The greatness of earth's greatest mart, that to herself she
claims,

The world's great wonder, England's boast, gives glory to
our Thames.

What hugest river of the earth such fleets as hers e'er
bore,

Such tribute rich from every land, such wealth from every
shore,

Such memories of mighty ones whose memories are
fames,

Who from their mighty deeds afar came homewards up
the Thames?

In Westminster's old Abbey's vaults, what buried greatness
lies!

Nelson and Wellington sleep there where Wren's dome fills
the skies;

Here stands proud England's senate-house with all its
mighty fames,

These are the boast of Englishmen, the glory of our Thames.

How many a river of the earth flows through a land of
slaves!

Her banks are throng'd with freemen's homes, are heap'd
with freemen's graves;

Name the free races of the earth, and he, who tells them,
names

Freemen of the free blood of those who dwell beside our
Thames.

How many a heart in many a land yearns to you with what
pride,

What love, by the far Ganges' banks, by the green Murray's
side !

By Ohio's waves, Columbia's stream, how many a free heart
names,

O with what love ! the old dear homes they left beside the
Thames.

River of England, your green banks no arm'd feet, thank
God !

No hostile hosts, no stranger ranks for centuries past have
trod;

O may no foemen ever come, to threat your homes with
flames!

But should they come we'll show them soon what hearts
are by the Thames.

Flow on in glory, still flow on, O Thames, unto the sea,
Through glories gone, through grandeurs here, through
greatness still to be:

Through the free homes of England flow, and may yet
higher fames,

Still nobler glories star your course, O my own native
Thames!

A LAMENT.

O who will be a husband to me !
And who will my baby's father be !
Soon my babe will be born and I'm all forlorn,
And who will comfort me !

Ah, war is a trade by which widows are made,
And sore, O full sore is my heart afraid
That, among the red slain, on some battle plain
My soldier will be laid.

Alone—alone, I must make my moan ;
No pity my father's heart has shown ;
My mother will scorn my babe when it's born,
And show it a face of stone.

O born to shame—to no father's name,
My baby will bear its mother's blame;
Only my love and its God's above
Will smile on my child of shame.

God send the day for which I so pray
When my child in his father's arms I shall lay!
O were he but here, my soldier dear!
O God! to see that day!

MY NATIVE TOWN.

O KENT has many a town and many
A pleasant village by stream and sea,
But O more pleasant, more dear than any,
Is my native town where I dwell, to me,
And leafy Greenwich, green pleasant Greenwich,
Dear to my heart will it ever be.

My native Greenwich, there dwelt my father,
And work'd for you till his early death;
O on what spot of the wide world rather
Would I first have seen day or have first have drawn
breath
Than in leafy Greenwich, green pleasant Greenwich,
That dear will be to me till death.

My boyhood's Greenwich,—each childish pleasure
In my old dear home in your streets I knew,
Each childish sadness, and thoughts I'll treasure,
Pleasant to think of my whole life through,
Of school-day times that long since in Greenwich
Sweet laughs and tears to my boy's eyes drew.

My manhood's Greenwich,—'tis there the gladness,
The griefs and cares of my life I've known,
But, whether my days brought joy or sadness,
Thought of with all, you've but dearer grown,
And joy and sorrow, my native Greenwich,
Have but drawn you more close to my heart alone.

· 'Tis there I've work'd to see those around me
Know wiser lives than their fathers knew,
With friends have labour'd that still have found me,
Through all my years, to your good still true,
And while I am with you, O pleasant Greenwich,
Still will I work, my town, for you.

O Medway, calm through your meadows winding,
Through blossoming hops that sweeten day,
O Darent, the shadows of orchards finding
Wherever your gleaming waters stray,
Who mates you with the royal river
That seawards by Greenwich glides away !

Oxford and Reading watch its flowing;
A pleasant stream to their wharves it shows;
By Windsor and emerald Richmond going,
Yet, scarcely a river, it onward goes,
But, here, where to Greenwich her domes it shadows,
With navies its broad breadth ebbs and flows.

O pleasant lawns by your chestnuts bounded,
O shadowing elms rook-throng'd through spring,
To me, by London's deep roar surrounded,
What thoughts of stillness and peace you bring,
Of Mays when I've heard your hawthorns' blossoms
Rustled apart by some brown bird's wing!

And, fate, were my lot but summer dreaming,
The lot of the toilless, careless few,
Greenwich, how blest were it, to my seeming,
To dream away life, my town, in you,
Watching Autumn turning to gold your woodlands,
Watching Spring-time leafing your boughs anew.

Ah, should my future from you be parted,
Should I not leave you, my town, with pain !
Sorrow here finds me less sad-hearted,
Joy more joyous than elsewhere; fain
Here would my age in peace glide deathwards,
Here in your earth a calm grave gain.

GOD BLESS THE DEAR OLD LAND!

A SONG FOR AUSTRALIA.

A THOUSAND leagues below the line, 'neath southern stars
and skies,

'Mid alien seas, the land that's ours, our own new England
lies;

From North to South, six thousand miles heave white with
ocean foam

Between the old dear land we've left and this our new-
found home;

Yet what though oceans stretch between, though here this
hour we stand!

Our hearts, thank God! are English still; God bless the
dear old land!

“To England!” men, a bumper brim; up, brothers, glass
in hand!

“England!” I give you, “England!” boys; “God bless the
dear old land!”

To some we see around us here, it may be, she was stern;

It may be, in her far-off fields they scarce their bread
could earn;

But though we thought our mother hard, we know now
she was wise

To drive us out to this new land that every need supplies;
We left her side with heavy hearts; we hardly thought
that then

We left her, soon with honest work to make us happy men;
Then to her name a bumper brim; up, brothers, glass in
hand!

“Our mother land!” here’s “England,” boys! “God bless
the dear old land!”

And what though far she’s sent us from her side! we love
her yet;

Her love we think of more and more; her coldness we
forget;

As northwards faint her dim cliffs died, how clung our
eyes to her;

Each league that thrust us farther off, the more her sons
we were;

And now our new land’s dear to us, dear as it is, we own
Yet dearer still is the old land, our native land alone;

Then to her name a bumper brim! up, brothers, glass in hand!

“ Our native land!” here’s “ England!” boys; “ God bless the dear old land !”

It may be she would call us back, back to her side again,
And bid us bring the wealth to her we’ve won beyond the main;

Sweet it would be her fields to see; but, dear to me and you,
Although the far old home may be, dear too we’ll make the new;

True to the land we’re treading, boys, that’s now our own we’ll be,

Howe’er our hearts may yearn to her, our mother o’er the sea ;

We’ve love for both ; we’re proud of both ; but up, men, glass in hand!

Here’s “ England—she that gave us birth ! God bless the dear old land !”

O what a greatness she makes ours ! her past is all our own,

And such a past as she can boast, and, brothers, she alone;

Her mighty ones the night of time triumphant shining
through,

Of them our sons shall proudly say, "They were our
fathers too;"

For us her living glory shines that has through ages shone;
Let's match it with a kindred blaze, through ages to
live on;

Thank God ! her great free tongue is ours ; up, brothers,
glass in hand!

Here's " England, freedom's boast and ours ! God bless
the dear old land!"

For us, from priests and kings she won rights of such
priceless worth

As make the races from her sprung the freemen of the
earth ;

Free faith, free thought, free speech, free laws, she won
through bitter strife,

That we might breathe unfetter'd air and live unshackled
life ;

Her freedom, boys, thank God ! is ours, and little need she
fear,

That we'll allow a right she's given to die or wither
here ;

Free-born, to her who made us free, up, brothers, glass in hand!

“Hope of the free,” here’s “England!” boys ; “God bless the dear old land !”

They say that dangers cloud her way, that despots lour and threat ;

What matters that ! her mighty arm can smite and conquer yet ;

Let Europe’s tyrants all combine, she’ll meet them with a smile;

Hers are Trafalgar’s broadsides still,—the hearts that won the Nile;

We are but young; we’re growing fast; but with what loving pride,

In danger’s hour, to front the storm, we’ll range us at her side;

We’ll pay the debt we owe her then; up, brothers, glass in hand!

“ May God confound her enemies ! God bless the dear old land !”

BY THE SEA.

Thou myriad-billow'd, restless Sea,
Thou awe and terror of the lands
That match not thy immensity,
Blue trampler of their thousand strands,
With endless life—eternal power
Thou mock'st us mortal things of breath ;
Ages to thee but as an hour,
Thou know'st not time, or change, or death !

Thy fellows are the eternal air,
The might of storms—the stars—the night,
The winds thy wastes of waves that tear,
The sun, and the great joy of light.
These share thy life ; these, but the nod
Of Him thou tremblest at, obey ;
These tell with thee the power of God ;
His ministers, with thee, are they.

Awful art thou when thou dost lie,
Sun-tawny, crouch'd upon thy sands,
Breathing the stillness of the sky,
Fawning upon the trembling lands;
Then, from thy couchant vastness, man
Such dumb and wondering terror drinks,
As through Thebes, hush'd and ashen, ran,
Gazing upon the breathing Sphynx.

But when, beneath the awful skies,
Storm-darken'd, in thy chainless might,
White with wild wrath, thou dost arise,
How are men scatter'd in thy sight!
Then woe to those, the things of breath,
Mortals by whom thy depths are trod;
Thou giv'st them and their vaunts to death;
They know thee for the scourge of God.

Dust of the dust, we come—we pass,
But fleeting shadows, of time born,
By time devour'd, shades thou dost glass
In thy eternity—thy scorn.

Earth changes; ages are not; thou
Wert, art, and still shalt be the same,
Vast, boundless, changeless, endless now
As when light first upon thee came.

And still, as when through brooding night
The first grey sunrise heard thee raise
Thy thunderous hymn, through gloom, through light,
On high goes up thy voice of praise.
Thou symbol of thy Maker's power,
Thou giv'st to man's eyes, faint and dim,
His might—His majesty; each hour,
In calm, in storm, thou speak'st of Him.

Strength is in thy salt breath, O Sea,
Empire and knowledge—wealth and sway;
The might—the glory born of thee,
The dull and shoreless lands obey;
Those whom the decks thou tossest throne,
These are to kingship crown'd by thee,
Heirs of the rule thou mak'st their own,
Theirs who dare home with thee, O Sea !

Chainless thou art; thy shores are free;
Earth breathes in sternness with thy breath;
Chainless resolves are born of thee,
High thoughts and proud strong scorn of death;
Who face thy wrath, nor fear, have lost
The dread of aught that earth has borne;
They who, on thy wild billows tost,
Pale not, man's terrors well may scorn.

World-girdler, how the earth's great hearts
Their awful greatness win from thee !
Lo ! to what height their stature starts,
They who have been thy brood, O Sea !
Thy might into their souls has grown ;
Thy vastness awes us in their names;
They are thy mighty ones—thy own,
With all thy grandeur in their fames.

What are the glories earth has given
Unto her greatest, told with those
For which thy mighty ones have striven,
Those which thy mighty love bestows ?

COLUMBUS—NELSON—these, thine own,
Hast thou not given their fames to be
Mightiest where'er thy might is known,
Sharers of thy eternity !

We are the playmates of thy waves,
Rock'd into greatness on thy breast;
Thou giv'st us all things—riches, graves,
Conquests, and all thy wild unrest.
We feel thy salt spray in our veins,
Thy tameless spirit in our souls;
Through the free thoughts of our free brains,
Through our free speech thy thunder rolls.

Yet thou art death's; thou, too, shalt be
Its prey, with earth and time, at last.
We die to live; the heavens shall see
Thy end; thou too shalt join the past.
Greater, O Sea, are we than thou:
I, when thy mighty life is o'er,
I, deathless, then shall be as now,
Immortal, when thou art no more.

THE TREASURE-FINDER.

“ WANDER forth into the sunshine—go thou, wander in the woodlands;
For the forest’s haunts of greenness, leave the toiling town behind:
Here, O mortal, worn and wilder’d, thou art poorest of the poorest—
There, in leafy ease and stillness, lo ! a treasure thou shalt find.”

So in dreams the voice spake to him: and the sleeper, eager-hearted,
Woke, and from the dreary striving of the city took his way;
Breathing hopes in with the sunshine—hopes as golden as the morning,
With a light foot hastening onward—on, to where the treasure lay.

Ah ! how want shall lie behind him ! in the streets' loud-clanging mazes,

He no more shall lack his station in the thronging haunts of men ;

He, now vainly seeking burdens that his spirit groans not under,

Searching vainly, scorn'd and hunger'd, shall be served and honour'd then.

Quicker beat his pulse, and quicker ; ever pleasure swam before him,

As he near'd the forest's shadows, as beneath its leaves he laugh'd,

As his heart went bounding onward through its glooms and verdurous alleys,

As his soul, its calm and coolness, ever deeper, deeper quaff'd.

On, through ferny dell and hollow—on, by oaken foliage shaded—

On, through sun-fleck'd paths he linger'd, with the woodbines tangled o'er ;

Under beechen boughs reclining, lapp'd in odours, songs,
and murmurs,
Spake the tongues of Nature through him, as they never
spake before.

Swell'd they out in clearest music—swell'd in tones of
murmuring sweetness,
Into harmonies transfusing all of beauty pour'd around ;
Hues and odours, forms and shadows, sunny bursts of
summer brightness,
All that ear and eye were drinking, pouring forth in
measured sound.

And the darkness of his spirit, to the glad tones of his
singing,
Pass'd, as pass'd the gloom when David sang, from the
dark soul of Saul;
Lo ! a glory brightens round him—round him Heaven's
own hymns are ringing;
From his kingly thought, Earth's bitter cares and weary
burdens fall.

Home returns he; home returning, how the world's keen
scoffings meet him—

All the purse-proud scorn of riches—all the sneers of
titled birth!

Ah! he brings a treasure back, that makes him heedless
how they greet him;

Poor, despised, the Poet knows himself God-chosen great
on earth.

TO THE AUTHORESS OF "ART-LIFE
IN MUNICH."

SEE—the ways of glory lie
Wide before thee; shall not God
Give thy feet the strength to try
These bright paths that Guido trod !
On ! be bold ! in faith there lies
Power that tracks high destinies.

Nature lives: her colours see;
These the touch of Titian caught;
Glooms and gleams are given to thee,
All with which dark Rembrandt wrought;
All from which they reap'd a name,
Nature—life, are still the same.

In the strength of truth be strong;
Doubt her never, though she be
Held at times of all men wrong—
To thyself, a mystery:
Trust in nature ; work and wait,—
All shall own her soon or late.

Work in worship; let not earth,
Low desires, thy strivings leaven;
Prayer—thine art should have the worth
Of an incense unto heaven;
So shall all Murillo saw
From thy canvas ask our awe.

Life hath angels at its tasks ;
Earth hath heroes—martyrs now:
Show us these; the present asks
Unto its own saints to bow;
Virtues, mask'd in poor disguise,
Give their whiteness to our eyes.

Holiest beauty to us show,
Such as heaven's own radiance wears,
Daily sorrows doom'd to know,
Toil and all life's common cares,—
Love and pity, walking earth,
Knowing not themselves their worth.

Yet why so?—to thee, the past,
Unto us a thing of death,
Lives a life, through thee, to last,
Breathes, before thee, living breath;
Place—time—garb—is either strange;
Life is life, how'e'er they change.

Look not thou through others' eyes;
Wiser, see thou with thine own;
Paint thy fresh thoughts as they rise,
Beauty to thy vigils shown;
Numa-like, coy Nature woo
For the charms she shows to few.

Welcome fame, if fame be won
Through the plaudits of the wise;
Though the many crown thee, shun
Plaudits which the few despise;
Hast thou genius?—thou wast born
God to serve, through praise or scorn.

JUANNA.

“ WHAT is it ails me, mother ?
Now tell me, tell me, pray,
Why I’m dreaming all the night long
And I’m musing all the day ?
I never laugh as once I did ;
I’m silent, dull and shy,
And still I must be question’d twice
Before I once reply.”

“ What your dreams are of, Juanna,
You first must to me show ;
What you muse about, Juanna,
That I must truly know ;
And where your thoughts are, you must say,
When you do not reply ;
Tell me this and then I’ll tell you
Why you dream and muse and sigh.”

“ O my dreams are still of Juan,
 Of him, by night and day,
And my thoughts are always with him,
 From me when he’s away;
I want him always by me;
 Will it be always so?
Day and night, no thought but Juan
 Shall I for ever know?”

“ Ah, I felt like you, Juanna,
 When I too was fifteen,
And well I know, my daughter,
 What your dreams and musings mean;
But, better than your mother,
 Your heart to you can tell
What ails you so, and if again
 You’ll evermore be well.”

“ I’ve ask’d my heart, my mother,
 And always its reply
Is to ache when Juan’s absent,
 And to flutter when he’s by.

“ But Juan says, but wed him,
I shall be changed he’s sure;
Now, mother, do you think so?
Will that surely work my cure ?

“ Ah, sweet, my own Juanna,
That I cannot surely know,
Though, with half the wives of Cadiz,
Men say that it is so ;
But with some like your poor mother
All hope of cure is o’er;
They whom they loved as lovers,
As husbands they adore.”

TO A. B.

WITH AN ALBUM.

TRACED on the inkless whiteness of this book,
What, dearest Alice, would its giver see ?
White thoughts, as stainless as itself, should be
All that on its pure leaves should meet your look.

May loving pens give to each page a voice
Of counsel or consolement or delight,
Wise words to guide all wavering thoughts aright,
Sweet tongues your listening fancy to rejoice.

Caged in these pages, here let poets bless
Your ears with songs that catch the music heard
Of angels, songs by which the heart is stirr'd
To truth and pity, good and gentleness.

Yes, let the birds that all the seasons hear,
The sweet-tongued poets, here rejoicing sing
Songs that amid the roar of streets shall bring
Nature and all the glory of the year.

Here be their sunshine that is always bright,
Their woods, how green, even in the city's gloom,
Their noons that glow, hot through the wintriest room,
Their landscapes, ever stretch'd before our sight.

A precious casket, Alice, be this book,
Of priceless memories, that you here may find
Dear tones, unheard, that you would call to mind,
And absent faces on which you would look.

Swiftly we pass; it may be, some shall fill
The voiceless grave, yet in these pages live,
Speaking the love that they, alive, would give,
To guide, rejoice, perchance console you still.

Life has its griefs for all; if sorrow come
On your life's path, even this poor book may hold,
So stored, a holy wisdom, more than gold,
Nor, ask'd for comfort, to your grief be dumb.

And may the beauty that your eyes here view,
The truth and gentleness that here you find,
Be written by it on your soul and mind,
And, loved of all, live evermore in you.

SONNETS.

S O N N E T S.

I.

FRIENDS, could I live a life of art alone,
Or, through and through, weave in its golden thread
With the poor cares of life, which win life's bread,
Then were my leaden hours for golden known.
O but my days—my thoughts, to call my own !
That golden dreams might glisten through my head,
Unscared by meaner inmates,—that instead
Of stoniest streets, earth's charms were to me shown !
Florence and Rome and Venice you have seen,
And Alpine solitudes sublime, that hear
Above their clouds, snowclad, still, cold, serene,
The avalanche to the valleys thunder fear.
Bared to your eyes, how bless'd ! such sights have been,
Henceforth, how often to them to appear !

II.

You shall be thought of with the scents of Spring,
Dim violets' odours and all blooms of May;
All the sweet sights of that remember'd day,
The thought of you straight to my eyes shall bring.
In hedge and elm shall thrush and linnet sing,
And the rook's pleasant caw shall cross our way
Where chestnuts all their milky cones display,
And gold-green limes their tender shadows fling.
Then of the Fairy Palace shall there come
Remembrance,—of all shapes of beauty there,
Goddess and nymph and hero, white and dumb,
Striking a stillness through the gazing air,
Awed with their sweetness. So you have become
Link'd in my memory with all things fair.

III.

You cross my dusty path with dreams divine,
And like Spring's sunbursts, light my hours to gold.
You bring all thoughts of beauty. I behold,
Looking on you, the noons of Venice shine,
And from the skies of Rome her suns decline.
The utterance of your names brings thoughts untold
Of art's high triumphs wrought by souls of old,
Babe and Madonna awed to love divine;
With you come Titian's colours to my eyes,
Prophets and holiest ones that Raphael drew,
Titans of Angelo, and gods arise,
White goddesses revealed to Phidias' view.
No common thought—no poorer sight, but flies
From fair imaginings that come with you.

IV.

Nor, Alchemists, turning to gold the lead
Of my dull'd days, alone your presence brings
Frescoed and aureoled saints about whom clings
The reverence that we owe their limners dead ;
To later triumphs are your names, too, wed
In my glad thought—names that Fame softlier sings
As yet than Leonardo's; her trump rings
But with the centuries-aged; yet theirs are read
Clearlier and clearlier, as the fresh years come,
On her throng'd tablets. As I think of you,
Memory of these we love so is not dumb;
I look upon the lives that Gainsborough drew;
Reynolds is with me, and, lo ! I become
Still'd into awe as Turner's world I view.

V.

With you, too, comes the Shakespeare of all sound,
Handel, whose glory was to us reveal'd
With last Spring's violets, when the organ peal'd
His mighty hymns—strains fittest to resound
With Heaven's hosannas the White Throne around,
While on the jasper sea archangels shield
Their eyes from the brightness that His glories yield.
Then swell'd for us his ocean-bursts of sound,
And myriad voices pour'd Miltonic praise,
And chorus answer'd chorus—choir to choir
Telling His majesty, who was ere day's
New glory was, or night's. On wing'd desire
Our souls stream'd upwards—in a hush'd amaze
Rapt, like the Prophet's, up to God in fire.

VI.

Of poet-homes was our delightful talk,
And of sweet singers o'er the Western seas,
Whose golden fancies, like our summer bees,
Swarm music round us wheresoe'er we walk,
And all our cares of their full triumph balk.
Of Holmes, well-loved, we spoke, who this day sees
Your Charles steal seawards by your home's dear trees.
Of Cambridge's dear poet was our talk,
Who gave Evangeline with us to dwell,
And wild, sweet Indian visions to our eyes,
With their strange beauty, which we love so well.
Of him I ask'd, with thoughts as sweet and wise
As those of which dim Academe's groves tell,
And of strong Lowell, whom two worlds so prize.

VII.

Nor were those, breathing not your Boston air,
Forgotten—Willis, dear for tender grace,
And Bryant, who by Wordsworth's side has place
For solemn thoughts and tones and fancies fair,
Blessings, how priceless to our world of care!
Would I might look in reverence on his face!
Nor were we silent of your gentle grace,
Read, my dear friend, so bless'd with genius rare.
The name of Whittier kindled in us praise,
Deep reverence for high life, and such fierce fire
Of Heaven as scorch'd black Egypt. Of our days,
Stoddard and Taylor named we, and desire
I had your dead great in your talk to raise.
Of thoughts of that sweet hour I never tire.

VIII.

And as the glory of the still May moon,
Gathering to fulness, soften'd the sweet night,
With English fames we lit the shadowy light,
Fames, like her brightness, to be greater soon,
But not, like that, to wane, but know a noon
Of perfect radiance in the future's sight,
Names that shall all the centuries delight,
Sweet to all coming ears as brooks in June.
Of Tennyson you told me; and the thought
That you had lived familiar in his home
Made you a wonder to me straight, and brought
More teeming fancies than your talk of Rome.
Then, too, my ear our Brownings' dear names caught,
Your friends in the shade of Peter's mighty dome.

IX.

So you have been with Severn, and have heard
The tongue that spoke to Keats the last farewell,
His on whose breast our darling's dear head fell,
When his great life sank from his latest word.
Sight of that face — what thoughts must it have stirr'd !
Sound of that voice — what memories must it tell
Of him who, lapp'd in glory, now sleeps well
'Neath Roman violets, where no critics gird.
Such is the doom of fame. Even as a saint,
Ere he be crown'd with heaven, devils abuse,
So bat-eyed critics as a devil paint
Genius, to hail whose greatness they refuse.
Need is there, friend, for those who, o'ertried, faint,
Of such as you, lest we some Keats, too, lose.

• • •

X.

What pleasant talk you bear across the sea,
To make you famous in your Boston home,
Beyond your Venice nights and days of Rome,
Your tales of Paris and of Italy.
For you have known those whom alone to see
Renowns one in your world across the foam
Of the wild sea; with such has been your home,
And, were you here, yours still their homes would be;
You'll be as he of our great Queen's great reign,
"Rare Ben," great Jonson, who with Drummond sat,
And, while his Hawthornden rare sack he'd drain,
Told of his Mermaid nights -- of this and that,
His fellows — Beaumont — Ford — and gave again
Shakespeare's wise wit and Fletcher's radiant chat.

XI.

And you have paced the streets that Cæsar trod,
And breathed the air that throbb'd to Cicero's tongue,
That heard the sweet-voiced odes of Horace sung,
When Jove on all Rome's templed hills was God,
And earth, through all its nations, own'd her nod.
There where the mighty Consuls from her sprung,
When victory close the gates of Janus swung,
Led nations captive, girt with axe and rod,
There, in her marble dust, your western feet
In marvelling awe, their wandering steps have set,
Treading on annals that still make hearts beat,
On memories that the centuries pale at yet.
Fetter'd she fell. My friend, that to repeat,
In your free land, O do not thou forget.

XII.

On being told that Charles Dickens had said that "the bust of Clytie must have been modelled from a real Greek girl, or it could not have been so beautiful."

Yes, so, great master of our smiles and tears,
So lived a real Clytie in the far past,
When grew the radiance that shall ever last,
And Athens' grandeur glorified the years.
Art then is highest when it humbly clears
The blots by life on perfect nature cast,
Gives her perfection, not by a line o'erpast,
And to mar that still reverently fears.
O Lady of the West, who art as fair
As she was, and wast born 'neath rule as free,
Perchance those eyes, in marble down-droop'd there,
Lit Salamis' red victors from the sea,
Or dropp'd from Alcibiades' bold stare.
So, snatch'd from time and death, you, friend, should be.

XIII.

"Should not the truest Art *interpret* rather than daguerreotype?"

Yet did Dione, sunning earth with smiles,
Rise radiant from the depths of Phidias' brain,
Nor Titian's colours for her sought in vain
Who netted the fierce Mars in her sweet wiles.
Say not that highest art one charm beguiles
From beauty, though its unshorn strength disdain
Aught earthly that would circumscribe its reign.
See, Ariel and the serpent who was Nile's,
These the fine brain of him who has no peer
Did re-create from nature. Truth alone
Is mighty; yet a mightier truth is here,
A truth God-given through man, who so hath shown
Shadow'd in him the might with awe we hear
Creating always all things to us known.

XIV.

IN THE DULWICH GALLERY—BEFORE GUIDO'S "ST. SEBASTIAN."

May 22nd, 1860.

And on this very canvas Guido wrought
The Christ-like beauty of these sainted eyes,
Fill'd but with God, even in these agonies.
How to the mighty master were they brought !
From his own brain was this great glory caught !
Whence did the radiance, here before us, rise !
Truly a sacredness untold there lies
In such rare visions. Given to man's thought
Are all his highest works of hand and brain ;
They seem but his ; these God himself creates.
Unless He work through us, we work in vain.
He, with pure heart and open soul, who waits
To do His bidding, he the crown shall gain,
And pass, through prayer, through glory's temple-gates.

XV.

IN LONDON. AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY—BEFORE MURILLO'S
“HOLY FAMILY.”

“ We are such things as dreams are made of;”—yes,
Friends, seem we not as breathings upon glass,
As wind-swept shades of clouds, that swiftly pass,
Seen by these changeless ones who ever bless
With the great glory of their loveliness,
All generations. Even as the grass,
We come and are not, while our works, alas !
Mock our mortality and nothingness.
Were earth our all, and did no lustres lie,
Of heaven, before our ever-aging eyes,
Well might we cry with him, who daily by
Great Leonardo's blest ones pass'd, “ Man dies ;
“ These radiant ones are of eternity ;
“ We are the shadows ; they, realities.”

XVI.

ON A VIOLET-STAND.

On such a shape, Aspasia loved to heap
Hymettus' thyme, Ilissus' violets,
To charm to softness Pericles, with frets
Of the Pnyx heated,—all his soul to steep
In hours of her and joy ; or, years to leap,
Some Roman Lydia's hand, ere time forgets
Lost Pompeii, till some distant century lets
Life's light upon its deaths, in hyacinths, deep
In purple as the violet skies on high,
Might hide with Nature its as beauteous art,
Even on that morn when hideous death drew nigh
Those fair Italian homes, while her young heart
Dream'd not Vesuvius soon, 'neath the black sky,
Would from its womb the entombing torrent start

XVII.

AT ROME—FROM THE HILL OF THE CAPITOL.

Look! for this hill has visions; hush, and see
Their passage; hark to that still nearing shout,
That thunder-burst of joy; all Rome is out
To-day; to-day a holiday must be;
Pompeius triumphs. O'er that tossing sea
Of up-turned faces—o'er the surging rout,
See, the great conqueror, glory-girt about
With gifts and treasures rent from victory,
With monarchs manacled—great Asian kings,
Rules and dominions crumbled in Rome's ire.
Hark to the blare of brazen trumpets; things,
Unseen of Rome till now, her gazing tire,
Tower'd elephants and spoils of which earth rings.
Can grander vision, friends, your thought desire!

XVIII.

ON A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE COLISEUM.

Here was the heart of Rome. Her lust of blood,
'Gainst which so long the nations of the earth
Cried vainly, here grew fiercer, or had birth,
Lapping in this vast murder-house the flood
Welling from veins of the wild savage brood
Of the strong North, here slaughter'd for her mirth.
Yet not in vain arose that cry of earth.
The avenging angel at God's foot-stool stood.
Sin is decay. The pitiless shall meet
No pity. Comes the Goth; the avenging day
Hastens to that fell call. The nations' feet
Quicken to hear it, on their road to slay.
To that, their hearts with lust of carnage beat;
Smit by that cry, Rome's red life shrieks away.

XIX.

What! you have look'd on Landor, and have heard
His agèd lips utter Miltonic thought,
In tones that seem from Bacon's great tongue caught,
Rich, with what wisdom, in each weighty word,
Speech by which they, fit for such food, are stirr'd
To brace their lives to noblest acts,—are taught
The Spartan mood by which the strong are brought
To near all glory like Jove's dazeless bird,
To know all is, for those who dare, endure,
And grasp success with hands that crush all stings.
O, old man eloquent, your place is sure,
Your place, how high, amid thought's sceptred kings,
The loftier lights and leaders of our race
To right and good, and scorn of meaner things.

XX.

To tread Rome with him, did not your heart beat,
With him who so could raise its dead to sight,
With him who so with wonder and delight
Fills the fit soul whose eyes his great thoughts meet,
With Robert Browning ? Fittest are his feet
To tread the marble of Rome's dust aright,
Fittest his words to grow to the great height
Of the great memories of her every street.
Fit audience has his genius found, if few
Yet, for the souls of most are small and poor.
Many the years that died ere England knew
Her Milton, ere her Wordsworth's place was sure.
Slowliest the mightiest glory ever grew;
Slowly his grows—how surely to endure.

XXI.

BEFORE WILKIE'S "COLUMBUS."

So look'd the great world-seeker. In neglect,
In poverty and the world's scorn, erect
 On the broad stand of the earth-changing thought
 Which the dumb West from out the Past's night caught
To light and life. Yet, friend, how nearly wreck'd
Seem'd that great thought which God will'd should connect
 The far, dim vast, which then his clear sight sought,
 And the old world, first wed in his clear thought.
What at that moment was in that broad brow !
 The gleam of the white multitudinous sails,
 The ocean-shuttles ever crossing now!
 The march of man towards where the sunset pales!
Of rules to which the coming times shall bow!
 Friend, lo, a God-sent purpose never fails.

XXII.

AT SOUTH KENSINGTON—IN THE TURNER GALLERY.

“ Wisdom doth dwell with children, round her knee,”
And, looking on these glories, they are wise
Who gaze on them with child-like hearts and eyes,
Content to feel, not doubt of what they see.
Truly a reverent spirit there should be
In eyes that look on things the highest prize
The highest. If they see not all that lies
Before them, they bring not the souls to see;
Therefore, dear Friends, has beauty unto you
Bared all her radiance, nor with any veil
Dimm'd her full lustre to your reverent view;
Therefore, before her, could you never fail
To see the loveliness reveal'd to few,
Deep hidden from souls, than yours, more gross and frail.

XXIII.

AT DULWICH.

Ah, the dear goodness of our gracious God !
Oh what a glory gilds the fields to-day !
The “glad light green” of blithe old Chaucer’s May
Gleams from the grass and laughs up as ’tis trod ;
There, to warm wooing airs sweet cowslips nod,
While, from their honey’d cups, bees boom away ;
Bright is the lime ; bright is the willow’s spray ;
Glory and joy are everywhere abroad,
Nor from our hearts that laugh aloud His praise,
His goodness who has made the Spring so fair,
Down scattering such bright blessings on our ways,
Painting His power and mercy everywhere.
O well our hearts may we in gladness raise
To Him who takes for us such gracious care !

XXIV.

IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL—BEFORE MICHAEL ANGELO'S
“LAST JUDGMENT.”

So the last trump shall sound, and all earth's dead
Shall gather to the mighty angel's cry,
All souls that ever wore mortality,
All flesh, to death, that ever bow'd the head.
Then from the throne shall the awful words be said,
Utter'd by Highest Justice, crown'd on high,
Dooming the unrighteous everlastingly,
While into bliss the pure of heart are led.
O what a soul was his this sight who saw,
Who gave its terrors by us to be seen
To seize all living souls with trembling awe,
As if, with him, spectators they have been
Of the just vengeance of eternal law,
Or shook appall'd even now in the dread scene.

XXV.

AT DULWICH.

Dear lie the meadows of full many a May,
Deep-grass'd and daisied, in my memory's sight;
Elms of how many a Spring, my thoughts, delight;
Blooms of what vanish'd years make sweet my way;
Dark hours are glorified with day on day
Departed, set into the past's dim night;
All lustres of my past, my present, light,
And dearer grow the longer that they stay.
Yet this glad day more dear will memory mark;
This day more surely will oblivion spurn;
Ne'er to be whelm'd in the pursuing dark,
But dearer, fairer, ever to return,
Till, cold, my ear can hear no more May's lark,
And suns no more for my closed eyes shall burn.

XXVI.

AT ANTWERP—BEFORE RUBENS' “DESCENT FROM
THE CROSS.”

O holiest spirit, most bless'd that e'er wore
 On earth these frail robes of mortality,
So for our human sake, Christ, didst thou die
 The death that thieves and malefactors bore,
 Making the Cross, how sacred ! evermore.
“ God, why hast thou forsaken me ! ”—that cry
 Shrieks through all ages thy wan agony
As when, first heard, the accursèd night it tore,
 And Mary knew it by the abhorred tree,
 And swoon'd from that wild wail in love and awe.
 And thou who here hast given to man to see
What shuddering earth, darkening her darkness, saw,
 Surely the tongue of God thou cam'st to be,
 To tell how He was given to death's fell maw !

XXVII.

Venice! Dear friends, how comes she to your eyes?
An Aphrodité rising from the sea,
Clasp'd half in waves—half in fierce glare, does she,
As Turner painted her, before you rise?
Or, nearer view'd, where the gondola plies
The oar through palaces that ruin see
Wan in their chambers, seems she, friends, to be
She who on Canaletto's canvas lies?
“ The Stones of Venice” you have brought away
For after-visions in your Boston air;
The halls where Titian's colours pale the day,
Which Veronese so throng'd with forms, how fair!
Which Tintoretto dyed—these with you stay
With the flush'd splendours of St. Mark's bright square.

XXVIII.

On the Rialto, too, your steps have been
And press'd the stones that Shylock's garment swept,
What time, blood-thirsting, he the appointment kept
With him who spat upon his gabardine.
The white doge-haunted palace you have seen
Where Byron loved and wrote; your hearts have leapt,
Thinking, beneath those leads, what souls have wept
Whom from the awful Ten no love could screen.
And you have stilly cut her hush'd lagune,
Your gondolier low-chanting to the oar,
While the soft splendour of the quiet moon
Silver'd her palaces, peopled no more
With rule and grandeur. Friends, may God full soon
Unto her hands, freedom and strength restore.

XXIX.

Ah, those Italian lakes ! My town-dull'd eyes
Weary to see them, lapp'd in the blue shade
By the deep hush of their still mountains made,
Dark with the purple of their violet skies,
Or crimson-stain'd with all the thousand dyes
That flush their waters when their sunsets fade,
Or purpled with deep nights whose moons are stay'd
To glass them in their deeps till morning rise.
Ah me, what music is in each sweet name !
Como—La Garda—what sweet sights they bring
To eyes that have not seen them, to their shame !
What calming music to the soul they sing !
Dear friends, their glassy sweetness with you came,
And with you ever to my thoughts will cling.

xxx.

When the laburnum droops its golden rain,
And lilacs flush with gladness all our ways,
When red and white-hued hawthorns scent our days,
For you in thought we shall not look in vain ;
With the dear May-time you shall come again.

Violets shall whisper of you — daisies raise
Your forms, dear friends, your faces to our gaze,
As when we saw together field and lane,
And laugh'd aloud in gladness at the Spring.

Come, let us please us with the dear-loved thought
That thrushes of you, friends, shall ever sing,
That by the larks' your voices shall be brought,
That, when each hedge and bough with twitters ring,
From each sweet sound, your dear tones shall be caught.

XXXI.

BEFORE THE DULWICH GALLERY.

O cherry-tree, in my hush'd thoughts still white
As when we saw your sweet snows in the sun!
Bless God! the joy of beauty's but begun
When the eye sees it; bright and yet more bright,
It shines for ever in the memory's sight,
With gathering loveliness from fancy won;
Therefore is beauty's value summ'd by none,
Its priceless endlessness of new delight.
Friends, as you speed across the summer sea,
Golden beneath the glory of the day,
Or silver'd by the night, that tree shall be
A haunting gladness which will not away;
There in your thought 'twill bloom eternally,
An endless memory of our hours of May.

XXXII.

IN THE CAPITOL—BEFORE “THE FAUN OF PRAXITELES,”

Which suggested to Hawthorne the Donatello of his
“Transformation.”

Look ! From this Faun the teeming brain of him
Who is your glory, gather'd mystic lore,
Which a new birth of strange, sweet wonder bore,
Of airy shadows that before us swim,
Of teachings, through their veiling beauty dim,
Yet sweet unto our souls for evermore.
So beauty ever adds to its dear store;
Its sweets, the forms that hold them, overbrim,
And flow into the soul that for them waits,
Soon from its depths, new-born, to re-appear.
So beauty, beauty, evermore creates;
Laugh on, O Faun ! for ever laughing here;
Henceforth your mirth's sweet worth, man higher rates!
Henceforth, to all you shall be doubly dear !

XXXIII.

IN THE VATICAN—BEFORE THE APOLLO BELVEDERE.

Wonder and worship ! Lo, this place hath grown
Awful with the still presence of the god !
Yonder, behold him, glorious as he trod
The air triumphant. There he breathes in stone
Immortal anger, but not wrath alone,
But radiance that rains violets on the sod,
And calls up amaranth where his feet have trod,
And hyacinths' purple, by his glory sown.
Utter no word ! The chamber's air is fill'd
Not with his glory only, but with theirs,
The great of centuries, who here have still'd
Their thoughts and dreams, ambitions, fears and cares.
Who, in the air those radiant splendours gild,
To give one thought to aught less heavenly, dares ?

XXXIV.

AT THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM—BEFORE “THE TURNERS.”

May 26th, 1860.

Look ! How his colours glorify the place
With lustres by no eyes of mortals seen,
Save his and such as his, whose sight hath been
Strengthen'd to look on Nature's robeless grace,
The awful beauty of her unveil'd face.

Yet seems she here transfigured in each scene—
Bright with a glory that hath never been ;
Immortal radiance shines from out all space,
“ The light that never was on sea or land,”
Ideal splendours that his soul's eye saw,
Flash'd into colours from his radiant hand,
Scenes that seem sinning against truth's clear law
To grosser gazers who before them stand,
But stilling you, dear friends, to praise and awe.

XXXV.

AT FLORENCE—BEFORE THE “VENUS DE MEDICI.”

Bless'd was the soul to which this marble thought,
In its still perfectness, by God was given,
Which stood translated then from earth to heaven,
Up to the gods' high courts an instant caught,
By strong desire of that for which it sought,
The immortal grace for which its thought had striven.
And, lo! the veiling clouds a moment riven,
He, to our eyes, eternal beauty brought,
The radiance of this glory, to all time.
There stands she with the eyes that ruin'd Troy ;
There looks she as she press'd hush'd Ida's thyme,
And smiled to love and death the Dardan boy,
Earth's beauty perfected to grace sublime,
The Queen of all the fulness of all joy.

XXXVI.

IN THE VATICAN—BEFORE THE FRESCOES OF THE
“STANZE DI RAFFAELLO.”

What dreams divine—what fancies not of earth,
What sweet imaginings, how heavenly fair,
Possess'd these rooms when Raphael breathed their air
And to their blest walls gave eternal worth
With these fair forms which from his brain had birth.
Here is his presence round us everywhere,
In the bright glory which these still ones share
With those whose grandeur girdles the world's girth,
The shapes of awfulness which hover near,
The Sistine's wonders, from the mighty thought
Of Angelo. Fitly the greatness here
Companions his, whose wondrous pencil wrought
There the dread scene that shakes all souls with fear,
With awe and horror from God's presence caught.

XXXVII.

IN ITALY—1860.

Friends, you have dwelt not only in her Past,
But her proud Present, for 't was yours to see
The surging waves of tossing Italy
Stilling from tempest, with their sky o'ercast,
Foretelling storm, how soon, how long to last,
Ere the great land of bygone rules be free,
And know no fetterers but the engirdling sea
And the embracing mountains round her cast.
You to the freedom of your Western hearts
Caught the dear accents, alien to her tongue
So long, the shout that from her Florence starts,
The cry that, to her God, Bologna flung,
And in your prayers and praise all had their parts,
Who, when she rose to smite, to help her sprung.

XXXVIII.

So this is yours, our Wordsworth's pictured face,
Great poet of the quiet lakes and hills,
Who with the gentle peace of nature stills
The fever of our lives. A peaceful place
God gave him 'mongst our toils, so the great race
He sprung from, 'mid their labours, cares and ills,
With the calm blessedness he felt, he fills,
With love of wisdom, beauty, good and grace.
When you last came, you held his living hand,
And, with what reverence, heard his every word.
Through a sweet day, with you, he of your land
Of freemen talked, or thought or feeling stirred
With converse of his art, rolling his grand
Deep verse out. O that I that voice had heard!

XXXIX.

What! Gad's Hill's haunted greenness you have seen.
There is a subtle spirit in its air;
The very soul of humour homes it there;
So is it now: of old so has it been;
Shakespeare from off it caught the rarest scene
That ever shook with laughs the sides of care;
..... Falstaff's fine instinct for a Prince grew where
That hill—what years since!—showed its Kentish green.
Fit home for England's world-loved Dickens, here
How fitly first the breath of earth he drew.
Here did the spirit of Shakespeare linger near
His dreaming cradle, as the boy he grew,
Whispering what fancies into his young ear,
Rare wit, deep humour, O how dear and true!

XL.

IN THE DULWICH GALLERY—BEFORE MURILLO'S
“FLOWER-GIRL.”

So smiled she in the hour in which he drew
This gladness for us ; so still smiles she now.
That laugh that then he gave her does not bow
To time or death, immortal, ever new
Delight, as when beneath his hand there grew
That red arch'd lip, that mirthful swarthy brow,
On which Art's dear love never will allow
One aging wrinkle, to her darling true.
Ah me ! before these ever-laughing eyes,
Ah me ! before these ever-blooming flowers,
What eyes have stood through vanish'd centuries !
What smiles have flitted through what bygone hours !
What hearts have beat on which the sod now lies,
And daisies whiten in May's gentle showers !

XLI.

THACKERAY.

Your own home heard our Fielding call you friend ;
Here you have found what welcome in his home,
Have chatted with him of your hours in Rome,
Your Paris days, till night almost had end.
What light to the charm'd hours you 've seen him lend !
What priceless memories over the far foam
You bear ! what flashes to illume your home,
That mirth through all your future days shall send,
Drawn from the nights 'twas yours with him to see !
How you are stored with laughs for all your years !
His wit, his wisdom, shall your fellows be
With time, with time, who, as he flies, endears
Such gifts divine of gracious memory ;
What wit more wise has charm'd all living ears !

XLII.

ITALY.

Hers is the home of Art, beauty's own clime;
Voiceless and whitest sculpture loves her well;
There painting's mightiest marvels ever dwell;
There architecture's grandeurs skywards climb;
Wan Dante makes her sweetest tongue sublime;
Her words her Petrarch's softest sorrows tell;
Through her tones, Ariosto's wonders swell,
And the great tale her Tasso told to time.
Boccaccio, Raphael, Angelo are hers;
Hers are Cellini's, Machiavelli's fames;
Hers is that mightiest memory that stirs
The souls of men, when, Rome, our wonder names.
What lustre Venice on her tale confers !
What glory she from radiant Florence claims !

XLIII.

MRS. BROWNING.

And you who have known this Miriam of our days,
Who, with clear clash of cymbals and with song
Triumphant, grand sweet words to ring as long
Through time as Shakespeare's, flings up prayer and praise
Unto God's footstool, fittest souls to raise
From out the earthly sloughs of sin and wrong,
Up into heaven's clear azure, borne along,
Wing'd by her words, to where heaven's lustre plays
Upon them, so to walk again the earth
With spirits that show still the light of heaven,
That have known henceforth always a new birth
Of meeker, lowlier hearts unto them given
By her great thoughts, to all of what dear worth,
From whose raised hearts, they earthliest thoughts have
driven.

XLIV.

AT MILAN—IN THE CONVENT OF THE MADONNA DELLE
GRAZIE.

A Dream of Leonardo Da Vinci's "Last Supper."

Enter ! and, entering, still your souls with awe ;
Behold the blesséd ones ! the Man Divine,
Even as he brake the bread and gave the wine,
And made His heart meek to obey the law,
The nearing doom even now His dear eyes saw.
" One of ye shall betray me." Those divine
Bow'd lips still utter it. Still, (O how fine
Was thy great genius, Leonardo !) awe,
O what deep love, wonder and horror, here
On these bless'd faces, in these eyes, we see,
Eager for ever, while in shame and fear,
Judas' soul shrinks aghast eternally.
O mightiest master, as our Raphael dear,
Match'd with this wonder here, what art may be ?

XLV.

EDGAR ALLEN POE.

You knew him, friend, this wonder, ere the night
Received him, and he vanish'd, seen no more
Of men, he who into death's darkness bore
What radiance and what blackness from our sight,
He form'd for our bewilderment, delight,
Our admiration, loathing, praise. Death tore
Never so strange a page from life before;
What wonder if we read it not aright?
His was a music tender, strange and wild;
The ghosts of many a weird, wan melody
Wailed from his lines; wan faces through them smiled;
The sense of horror there unceasingly
Haunts us, to terror and to awe beguiled
By what we know not—what we feel, not see.

XLVI.

AT ALFRED TENNYSON'S.

So you have breathed a week in the very home
Of our sweet dreamer of all golden dreams;
As, thro' my thought, his name's bright radiance streams,
With it, what countless lustrous fancies come,
In whose bright presence well may men grow dumb
With love and worship. Wonder well beseems
The eyes, dear friends, on which their lustre beams,
Brightness, alas, dim to the eyes of some.
Ah me! what shapes of heavenly beauty rise
With the dear utterance of his world-loved name!
What forms of majesty time lives to prize,
Splendours that earliest from his rare brain came,
And grandeurs later lent to our blest eyes,
With whose eternal life shall live his fame!

XLVII.

AT ROME—IN THE FORUM.

Hark to the clash of arms, the trumpets' blare !
Through shouting streets, the out-pour'd city's roar,
By face-throng'd roofs, by every bough-wreath'd door,
By wide-oped temples flush'd with garlands fair,
Through the vast wonder of the gazing air,
The spoils and marvels of the triumph pour,
Boasts lost to Macedon for evermore,
Statue and vase emboss'd and paintings rare,
Great priceless cups her Philip loved to drain,
Ancestral gold, by Alexander worn,
Gems that flash'd glory on his mighty reign,
Treasures unsumm'd from her cleft phalanx torn
By Rome's fierce legions on loud Pydna's plain.
See, Perseus chain'd,—Æmilius chariot-borne.

XLVIII.

IN THE TOWER OF LONDON.

These stones were trod by Raleigh's prison'd feet ;
Think, then, what vast thoughts breathed within this cell,
What radiant fancies by your eyes loved well,
Fancies still in our souls, with music sweet ;
How his great spirit's wings here vainly beat
These bars for issue, weak are words to tell,
For flight to that far unknown world, where dwell
Nations he planted — English hearts that meet
With reverence the grand utterance of his name
Who was the sun of our great Queen's bright reign
And our abhorred Stuart's worst of shame,
To hide whose baseness time must strive in vain ;
Link'd is that crown'd sin to his living fame
Whose mortal like earth yearns to know again.

XLIX.

WRITTEN IN NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S "TRANSFORMATION."

1.

O mightiest name of death ! O awful Rome !
How has he writ in marble on thy hills
His presence ! Death thy stony valleys fills ;
There, with the ghostly past, he makes his home ;
Yet, in the shadows of thy mighty dome,
What life eternal lives, a breath that stills
His boasts to dumbness, and, thy conqueror, kills.
Who breathe thy air. deathless henceforth become ;
For ears that hear, thy lips have mystic lore :
To those who question thee in the weird might
Of genius, lo, thy thousand tongues restore
The spells that scare Oblivion to flight.
Greatness is in thy touch. Lo, here, once more
To one thou giv'st thy glory as his right.

L.

WRITTEN IN NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S "TRANSFORMATION."

2.

Here is the life of Rome. The air of death,
Silence and solitude and awe are here;
Spectres of grandeur, at whose bygone breath
Earth still'd and trembled, from these leaves appear;
From these weird words steal wonder and strange fear,
An awful past, which he who listeneth
In solemn awe, with trembling heart may hear,
Hearing what from her stones the Bygone saith.
Here is the double life that haunts Rome's hills,
Power spelt in ruins — art that wreathes all time,
Beauty eternal which the rapt air fills
With reverence from fit souls from every clime.
Hawthorne, henceforth, here, with life's joys and ills,
Rome's thoughts are with me, and her dreams sublime.

LI.

WRITTEN IN NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S "TRANSFORMATION."

3.

"From evil, good; from sin and sorrow, peace,
A holier future and a loftier faith."

This, to the soul, thy mystic volume saith,
Hawthorne, and bids Doubt's spectral night to cease,
Offering, from its dread gloom, what blest release !

If any say, "Evil accuses Him,
From whom is all, of evil," here in dim
Wan characters is writ, "Good hath increase,
Even from the stifling ill with which it strives.

God's wisdom is not ours. From blackest ill,
Souls, sorrow-deepen'd, have won whitest lives.
Bless Him for all things. All things are His will:
His stroke the granite of our hearts but rives
That light may enter, and His ends fulfil."

LII.

JOHN RUSKIN.

1.

Our poet-priest of art you should have seen,
Who makes its voice one deep-toned hymn to God,
Who'd have its paths with feet the holiest trod,
Such as where Pisa's time-smooth'd graves are green
And silent, in her Holy Field have been,
And girt with tender beauty its dear sod,
Memmi, Orcagna, and he, dear to God,
Gaddi. Nor have such, by him, been unseen
Breathing amongst us, with whom art is prayer,
Each work is worship, where, nor faint nor dim
Glory to God is wrought in beauty rare,
In shapes and colours, through which upward swim
Sweet incense, which our awed souls skywards bear.
Hunt and Rosetti, so your hands praise Him.

LIII.

JOHN RUSKIN.

2.

His words, I know, are priceless thoughts with you;
You should have had his face, friends, in your sight
For your remembrance, wonder and delight;
For he is one of England's rarest few,
Mating our days with the great times that knew
Our mother-tongue grow grander in its flight
From Milton's pen, pleading sublime for right,
And the rich organ-roll full pealing through
Our holy Taylor's strains of heavenly thought.
Then looking on him, in him, friends, your eyes
Had seen one who from Truth's own lips has caught
Wisdom and faith her lightest words to prize,
Knowing, through her, God's wondrous will is wrought
That art, a child uttering her words, is wise.

LIV.

When I remember how my hours go by,
My days to months, my months to dead years grow,
Then the swift shortness of my life I know,
How little I may do or ere I die;
Then do I feel how time I waste, and cry
“ Art woos me lovingly her charms to show,
I, still thrust from her; will it still be so?
Will life be fruitless everlastingly?
O will no season of sweet leisure be,
Release from all this care for things, how poor,
For my chain'd thoughts, so yearning to be free,
Doom'd still such daily task-work to endure.
Art gives you gold; O were it so with me!
That she would give my needs, O were I sure!”

LV.

IN PARIS. AT THE LOUVRE—BEFORE MURILLO'S
“IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.”

Half could I worship thee as pictured here,
O thou Maid-mother of the Child divine,
Around whose pathway heaven's own lightnings shine,
Filling thee with a love that conquereth fear,
Making thee to the heart of man, how dear!
Yea, sacred, even unto eyes like mine
That are not Rome's, sacred, nay all divine,
Until to bow to thee my soul is near.
O mighty master, light of thy great Spain,
Many thy canvasses that wake our awe;
But for one like this, eyes must look in vain,
Fill'd with the glory here thy bless'd eyes saw,
Rapt up on high to where the splendours reign,
Archangels worship, and but love is law.

LVI.

IN LONDON—BEFORE HOLMAN HUNT'S " FINDING OF CHRIST IN
THE TEMPLE."

So worshipped Gaddi; so Masaccio sent
His heart up in a holy hymn to heaven;
Such incense, from Ghiberti's spirit given,
An offering fair, up to God's footstool went.
These held their masteries but as talents lent
By their high Lord; not to His labour driven
Went they, of those to win His smile who've striven,
To tell His power, His glory, ever bent.
To his work their reverent spirit has he brought,
For the vain praise of man having less care,
Than to refresh his soul with the blest thought,
His pencil has made righteousness more fair
Unto dull'd eyes. Friends, he this wonder wrought,
Like Fra Angelico, in the might of prayer.

LVII.

And of our great ones, him you should have known,
Kingsley, in whom fire of the altar burns,
The flame of God's old Hebrew ire, that turns
His words to lightnings, and the awful tone
Of thunders, kin to the wrathful wonders shown
To Pharaoh's hardness, so his spirit yearns
To smite out sin, while from his Lord he earns
Love, the blest guerdon which he seeks alone.
For him, we bless God. Of such have we need
In this our day, troubled with evil sore,
Great want of shepherds, such as he, to feed
Fitly our hungering souls. O had we more
Like him, not eaten up with earthly greed,
But with desire of Him the Cross who bore.

LVIII.

AT ROME—BEFORE ST. PETER'S.

By the Janiculum, how awful stands
The shadowing vastness of its mighty dome,
Fit fellow of the memories that home
In her who was the ruler of all lands.
Before this mightiest toil of human hands,
This glory of the glories of great Rome,
To stand, O well across the ocean foam,
Friends, have you come. Faith here high-throned
commands
Men's souls, as strength here once their spirits sway'd;
So is earth always subject to these hills;
Here art, sublime by the vast grandeur made
Of Angelo, heaven with his glory fills,
The while all lands bow to her as he bade,
And every soul before her greatness stills.

LIX.

AT ROME—IN ST. PETER'S.

Enter and wonder. Here, in the might of art,
Would superstition chain men's prostrate souls;
Here homes the soaring spirit that controls
The reason through the impulse of the heart,
Giving the brain in man's belief no part,
Faith wrought from feeling. But time forward rolls,
And more is needed by earth's hungering souls
Than beauty, at whose awfulness we start,
Can feed them with. Therefore of change men dream;
Therefore, in the vast shadow of this dome,
Are fear and trembling, and the alien gleam
Of bayonets; therefore does the soldier home
In thy hush'd palaces that peaceful seem
Until the breeding earthquake shake thee, Rome.

LX.

IN LONDON—BEFORE ST. PAUL'S.

O would that men would treat this wonder right !
Our own St. Peter's, this vast thought of Wren,
This marble marvel should not vainly then
Be fitly sought for by men's eager sight ;
Then were it thrown wide open to the light,
Throned in clear space, not prison'd in this den
Of houses mean that shut that up from men
Which should be all men's wonder and delight.

O mighty art thou, London, but one thing
Thou lackest greatly, souls to make thee great
Like those that bade great Brunelleschi fling
Grandeur o'er Florence and Ghiberti's gate
Crown her with glory ; then the earth should ring
With this world's wonder, fitly seen though late.

LXI.

IN LONDON—IN TRAFALGAR-SQUARE—BEFORE THE STATUE
OF GENERAL SIR CHARLES JAMES NAPIER.

We are the living Romans of the earth,
Strong-nerved, high-thoughted, for that we are free ;
Therefore earth-rulers are we and shall be,
While we, self-ruled, still hold our great rights worth
The blood that won them. Free, there is no dearth
To-day of ancient greatness with us. We
Lack not great souls that give us deeds to see
From which our greater future leaps to birth.
Look, Cæsar's spirit homed in that strong brain ;
That brow, that eagle-look—all Rome is there.
Strong the high wreaths of victory to gain,
But, greater than the Roman, quick to spare,
The stricken ask'd his mercy not in vain.
Bless God, O land, thy days such souls still bear.

LXII.

GARIBALDI.

Did you not hear it ! Crept not that name by,
A muttering earthquake, through your Roman air ?
Her new Rienzi, lo, his shadow there,
And the Sardinian victor's, gloom her sky,
To her soul-fetterers, everlasting,
A terror and a horror everywhere.
Born all things greatly to endure, to dare,
With antique greatness, ruin to defy,
Still held he on, still holds he on the same,
Ever alike, in failure and success ;
Unchanged alike, though baseness brand his name,
Or justice crown it. Italy, O bless
Him, through all time, through whom thy free life came,
Thy great free life of strength and blessedness !

LXIII.

AT FLORENCE — IN FRA ANGELICO'S CELL IN THE CONVENT OF
ST. MARK.

Mighty was Launcelot, great Tristram strong,
Yet, stain'd with sin both, strength might not avail
To help them venturing for the Holy Grail;
To Galahad, spotless of all shame and wrong,
All white of heart, did that bless'd quest belong,
And strong in pureness, arm'd in the heavenly mail
Of holiness, he sought and did not fail,
And, God's own knight, shines radiant still in song.
So, strong the most bless'd wreaths of art to win,
Are holiest thoughts and blessèdest desires,
Life that lives pure from spot of self or sin,
And, to show forth God's glory, never tires.
So fame, Angelico, thou findest in
Prayers that burn heavenward, in what holy fires.

LXIV.

AT ROME — IN THE FORUM.

Here grew her strength with which she trod down kings,
And came and saw and conquer'd the wide earth;
Her might here from her free life leapt to birth,
Here the vast greatness with which time still rings,
Which dwarfs all rules else into lesser things.

Here o'er her stormy crowds' fierce wrath or mirth
Thunder her Gracchi; here, their blood soaks earth
O'er which the thought of Cæsar glory flings;
Still Cicero's words burn through this haunted air;
Sylla's dread presence here appals us still;
For her high Consulships, Pompey pleads there,
There Marius' slaughtering words the scared hush fill;
Nero, Vespasian, Titus,—everywhere
Is greatness, awing man with good or ill.

LXV.

Shall Rome not live again? Shall she not know
Days fit to fellow with her mighty Past?
Her life, which now is death, this shall not last;
Hark! from Palermo, volleys thunder “No!”
Milan is fetterless; Florence dare show
Her heart bared now, her tyrant from her cast;
Bologna, Pisa, own free lips at last;
Turin strikes strongly; will it not be so,
O Etna, with your own green Sicily,
From which, like chaff, Italian swords have driven
Their tyrant’s hordes into the sundering sea?
Not for this only has our great one striven;
Once more Rome’s sword shall Garibaldi be;
Once more to her shall her great life be given.

LXVI.

ON A PHOTOGRAPH OF TASSO.

“They learn in suffering what they teach in song:”
So was it with the life we gaze on here ?
No; the great glory of his tale is clear
From the deep shadow of his mortal wrong;
Gladness and faith to his great strain belong,
Sung not alone to be sweet to man’s ear,
But in the higher hope, the faith more dear,
That he who will’d it would approve his song.
Strange that this brow in awe we look on here,
God should have will’d such anguish to have known,
That madness, from its suffering and its fear,
Its heart’s despair, could give it rest alone !
Yet those eyes saw the mighty vision clear,
And made its glory his, its joy, our own.

LXVII.

FLORENCE.

1.

Beautiful Florence ! many a name is sweet
In the world's ear, but thine is very song;
Music and beauty's rarest charm belong
To its dear sound, and in its utterance meet,
And in thine Arno's, that, along each street,
Winds wooingly, fond loitering among
Thy palaces, on which Time's touch no wrong
Will lay, since they are sacred from the feet
That, treading, made them famous evermore.

Oh, that thy cypresses, these eyes might see !
Thy statued walks, these feet might wander o'er !
That to these ears thy fountains' plash might be
Gladness ! Oh, thy still goddess to adore,
Thy heaven of beauty lustrous from the sea !

LXVIII.

FLORENCE.

2.

Neri, Bianchi, Guelf and Ghibeline,
These iron-grated windows of them tell ;
These castled mansions of them whisper well,
And of the struggles which these streets have seen,
Fell wrath, and vengeful hate, which here have been,
And subtle brains, which here once tower'd or fell ;
Still in these palaces grim shadows dwell,
Whose names for ages on men's tongues have been.
Before their palace, the Riccardi, pause ;
There wrought the Medici their good and ill ;
Cosmo's grand presence here the eye still awes ;
Lorenzo's voice starts from the silence still ;
Great were thy tyrants, Florence. Equal laws,
Bless God ! now rule thee by thy own great will.

LXIX.

FLORENCE.

3.

Yet lightlier reck we of their strength and power,
Than of the greatness here that stamps them great,
Art's radiant glories which illumed their state,
And made them more than puppets of their hour,
Throned things the years create, the years devour ;
Hush'd are their schemes and plots, their pride, and hate,
The fear, the love, that on their pomp would wait,
Smile with their smile, or with their frown would lour ;
What reck we of them ? But we reverence still,
In each what makes us bow to each great name,
Their love for beauty whose bright glories fill
Their chambers with the forms which are their fame ;
For this, nor time, nor change, their names shall kill,
Or dim their memories, or their glories shame.

LXX.

ON A PHOTOGRAPH OF DANTE.

How changed from the young face Giotto drew !
That surely the dread vision had not seen,
That scarcely through the torturing gloom had been,
Or known the sights this pain-worn visage knew ;
What do these deep lines and this woeful hue,
These features, cold and thin, and smileless, mean ?
Deep wrath and hate in those sad eyes have been,
In that aged brow, woes felt but by the few ;
What matters all ! That sorrow-wrinkled brow
God's hand hath smoothed ; those weary eyes have rest ;
The peace it cried for, that tried heart has now ;
Anguish and ire no more disturb that breast ;
God bade him weep and sing, and now we bow
To his great glory, who through tears is blest.

LXXI.

AT FLORENCE—IN SANTA CROCE—BY THE TOMB OF
MACHIAVELLI.

Here lies his dust; where is the spirit now
That, subtle as the serpent, here once wrought,
And train'd for hell how many a sceptred thought ?
Where is the soul that schemed 'neath that still brow,
That to all ill full action dared allow,
So that it grasp'd the glittering prize it sought,
So that the crowns of time to heads it brought
That here in dust before death's footstool bow ?
Come here, ye kings; ye subtle brains, come here,
Who, evil wrought for thrones, dare hold for good,
Doth not a voice here cry to you to care
For heaven's hereafter ? rightly understood
Are earth and hell here. Death speaks everywhere;
Would ye would heed his still words as ye should !

LXXII.

AT PISA—IN THE CAMPO SANTO—BEFORE THE FRESCOES
AND TOMB OF BENOZZO GOZZOLI.

Sleep on, Benozzo, in her Holy Field,
By thee made holier. From thy pencil here,
What prayers, what solemn hymns, full-toned and clear,
Unto thy God their praise and glory yield !
These through the speeding centuries have peal'd
Strains to the raptured souls of men how dear,
Strains fit to rise in reverence to His ear
Before whose light, their sight, archangels shield.
Our God forgot, we work alone for men,
For man's poor praises now alone have care;
So Art, that wore celestial radiance then,
And heavenly robes she may no longer wear,
She shall not know her olden power till when
She too our prayers to heaven again shall bear.

LXXXIII.

MILAN, 1860.

Greatness dies not; from grandeur, grandeur springs;
From glory, glory evermore is born;
Therefore has she, who was the oppressor's scorn,
Found might in memory to tread down kings,
Making a present with whose deeds earth rings;
Therefore sits she, chain'd 'mongst the lands, forlorn,
No longer; in that strength rising, has torn
Her right to live greatly from the crowned things
That wrought her evil. She hath stung the heel
That crush'd the iron into her great soul.
Freedom is hers, grasp'd mid the clash of steel;
Tyrants no more her thoughts, her tongue control;
Free is the course; her past does she not feel
Shouting her on again to glory's goal!

LXXIV.

IN LONDON—BEFORE MR. CROPSEY'S "AUTUMN ON
THE HUDSON."

Forgot are summer and our English air;
Here is your Autumn, with her wondrous dyes;
Silent and vast your forests round us rise;
God, glorified in nature, fronts us there,
In His transcendant works, as heavenly fair
As when they first seem'd good unto His eyes.
See, what a brightness on the canvas lies.
Hues, seen not here, flash on us everywhere;
Radiance that nature here from us conceals,
Glory with which she beautifies decay
In your far world, this master's hand reveals,
Wafting our blest sight from dimm'd streets away,
With what rare power! to where our awed souls kneel
To Him who bade these splendours light the day.

LXXV.

TO MARY HOWITT.

So should a life be lived, that genius lifts
To higher duties than life asks from all;
So art in blessed influences should fall
Upon all hearts—using its mighty gifts
Man's thoughts and common acts to purify,
Breeding a loftier life and nobler aims,
A faith that liveth not in forms and names
But in the deeds that fit a soul to die;
And well thy blessed influence may we prize,
Moving about our paths in deeds of love,
In gentle words and household charities;
Well therefore may our reverence, above
The glare of useless fames, thy memory raise,
Throning thee in our love as high as in our praise.

LXXXVI.

TO MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

Out have I been this morning—out—away,
Far from the bustling carefulness of towns,
Through April gleams and showers—on windy downs,
By rushy meadow-streams with willows grey;
In thick-leaf'd woods have hid me from the day
Sultry with June—and where the windmill crowns
The hills' green height, the landscape that renouns
Thy own green county, have I, as I lay
Crushing the sweetness of the flowering thyme,
Track'd through the misty distance. Village greens
All shout and cheerfulness in cricket time,
Red winter firesides—autumn cornfield scenes,
All have I seen, ere I my chair forsook,
Thanks to the magic of thy breezy book.

LXXVII.

TO KEATS.

O nightingale, thou wert for golden Junes,
Not for the gusts of March! Oh, not for strife
With wind and tempest was thy Summer life,
Mate of the sultry grasshopper, whose tunes
Of ecstasy leap faint up steaming noons,
Keen in their gladness as the shrilling fife.
With smiles not sighs thy days should have been rife,
With quiet, calm as sleeps 'neath harvest moons;
Thee, nature fashion'd like the belted bee,
Roamer of sunshine, fellow of the flowers,
Hiving up honied sweets for man, to see
No touch of tears in all thy radiant hours;
Alas, sweet singer, that thou might'st not live
Sunn'd in the gladness that thou cam'st to give!

LXXVIII.

TO LEIGH HUNT.

“ Spring flowers—spring flowers!”—all April’s in the cry ;
Not the dim April of the dull grey street,
But she of showers and sunbursts whom we meet
On dewy field-paths, ere the daisy’s dry,
And breezy hill-sides when the morning’s high.
“ Spring flowers—spring flowers!”—the very cry is sweet
With violets and the airs that stay the feet,
The showery fragrance of the sweetbriar nigh ;
Yet all and more than in that cry is found,
Rises before us with thy pleasant name,
LEIGH HUNT ; with the dear gladness of the sound,
Into my close room, all the country came ;
Deep lanes and meadow-streams rose with the word,
And through the hush of woods, the cuckoo’s call I heard.

LXXIX.

TO LEIGH HUNT.

How sumless is the debt to him we owe,
Little, perchance, unto ourselves is known;
Little, perchance, how thickly he has sown
Our paths through time with pleasantness, we know;
His genial nature has not pulsed below
The loving teachings of his works alone;
A thousand deeds of good in others, own
His thoughts and words their angel-prompters; so,
Unrecognised, before our very eyes
His gentleness in that of others' lives,
And many a kindly look and tone we prize,
And many a smile that to our firesides gives
The charm the most endearing them, have caught
Their power to bless us, from his gentle thought.

LXXX.

A RECOLLECTION OF THE PERFORMANCE OF "ION."

Yes, I have sat before it; I have heard,
 Heard with the plaudits of delightful tears,
The heart's real praises of sweet hopes and fears,
Life give a breathing utterance to each word,
Each phrase that in the hush of thought has stirr'd
 My pulse so often; still to Fancy's ears
 Wander low tones, in which again it hears
The gentle thoughts that have so oft recurr'd;
 O dream of sorrow, ever be thy name,
Ion, a tender glory unto him
 Who gave thy sweetness to the world's charm'd ears,
 Gave thee, a thought to haunt the tongue of fame,
A sad sweet memory human eyes to dim,
 A gentle moan of music wed to tears.

LXXXI.

WRITTEN IN MACAULAY'S "LAYS OF ANCIENT ROME."

The plunge of standards, reeling to and fro.
Barks winter-tost upon a howling sea—
Rome's bucklers' conquering glare, I, battling, see,
Her swoop of death upon the warring foe;
The thrust, the grapple, and the yell below
The gloom of dust—cries, now that on, now flee—
Fierce trumpets blaring aye tempestuously,
That thunder to the stormy battle blow,
And now the rushing roar of flight I hear,
Loading with awe the pulses of the wind—
Before—the shriek of death—the yell of fear—
The slaughtering shout of victory, behind.
O wondrous art! so giving one to look
On Rome's fierce life! O marvel of a book!

LXXXII.

MOTHERWELL'S GRAVE.

“ It is painful to be obliged to state, that Motberwell's grave cannot be discovered without the assistance of a guide, not being marked by even a headstone.”—M'CONECHY's *Memoir of Motherwell*.

A memory writ in tide-swept sands,—a name
Graven on running waters, was the doom
That, from the dusky portals of the tomb,
Thou sawest, Motherwell, await thy fame;
And who thy dark imaginings dare blame?
Upon thy nameless grave the wild-flowers bloom;
Nature, the resting-place of him by whom,
Unto the city where he dwelt, there came
A glory and a sanctity, alone
Hath deck'd with beauty. Oh, to Glasgow shame,
That to her poet hath not given a stone,
Graving her proudest honour in her claim
To him whose memory hath a life sublime,
Enlink'd unto the sweetest tears of time.

LXXXIII.

AT ROME -- ON THE PINCIAN HILL.

Sweet were those sunsets from the Pincian seen,
Wheu day died westward from the hills of Rome
To rise in glory on your far dear home
And the loved paths from which your feet have been
So long. Oh, then remember'd was the scene
Before you? Did not, from its wonders, roam
Memory and love, across the wild far foam,
To nestle fondly 'neath your vines' dear green,
And the flush'd roses that hang trailing o'er
Your Boston casements, looking for each face
Familiar once there, now there seen no more?
Ah, dear will be the hours that, the sweet grace
Of those loved rooms, to your worn eyes restore,
That in them find your feet a resting-place.

LXXXIV.

Would God had homed me near your fireside, friends,
Not sunder'd us by all the vasty sea,
Though nought to close-link'd hearts can distance be,
And friendship's power, the power of space, transcends.
If but to hear your tongues this brief while lends
Such dearness to the hours you talk'd with me,
What were each day, if everlastingly
Mingled our lives until their mortal ends.
What radiant hours, how swift-paced, then were mine,
Hours turning all they touch'd of life to gold,
Hours wing'd with converse of all souls divine,
Painters and poets given to earth of old,
And of those with us, spirits rare and fine,
Whose names by glory more and more are told.

LXXXV.

Yours be a life of pleasure, lapp'd in ease,
Ease by the nobleness of labour won,
By service to man's thought and fancy done.

Your calling gives you power men's souls to seize
And lift them skyward. Not alone to please
The sense, should art go forth beneath the sun,
But, by her beauty, that man may be won
To heights on earth from which heaven clear he sees.

Friends, you will nobly do God's bidding here;
Your path be pleasantness, through which your feet
May journey onwards still in joy, not fear,
While love and friendship make your hours, how sweet !
The radiance of the eternal day to meet,
And, with white lives, before The Throne appear.

WITH SOME ENGRAVINGS,

In remembrance of the South Kensington Pictures, May 26th, 1860.

Take these faint shadowings of divinest art;
Dear Friends, if they some pleasant thoughts impart,
They do the bidding of a true friend's heart.

See here Death's shadow on Rome's sunlight thrown;
Dark spectre of earth's mightiest rule o'erthrown,
So stands her Colisseum vast and lone.

Here Turner bathes his Venice's lagunes
In glare and shimmer, fiercer than fierce June's,
The fiery glory of his deathless noons.

Here see how Leslie, Irving of his art,
Makes Sterne's dear humour from his canvas start,
And the deep laughter of Cervantes' heart.

Ocean's far glooms and glories stretch between
 Your home and nooks that, friends, we here have seen;
 See them in Gainsborough's landscapes always green.

Here Wilkie, gentler Hogarth of our day,
 Scotland's rude life redeems from time's strong sway,
 While laughs and tears his pencil's charm obey.

An English farm, such as our Mitford drew,
 (O finest heart, so dear to me—to you!)
 See here a Constable, how rough, how true.

A Reynolds—who with tenderer hand could draw
 This sweet boy-prophet, rapt in love and awe,
 Or this fair child his English genius saw.

“Beauty is joy for ever,” says our Keats;
 Be these a gladness, every day repeats,
 Stillness and calm, even in your busy streets.

Let us be link'd by beauty. Let these be
 Whispers of hours, how happy, friends, to me,
 Till yours again my eyes rejoicing see.

CRADLE SONG.

Sleep ! the bird is in its nest;
Sleep ! the bee is hush'd in rest;
Sleep ! rock'd on thy mother's breast;
 Lullaby !
To thy mother's fond heart press'd,
 Lullaby !

Sleep ! the waning daylight dies;
Sleep ! the stars dream in the skies;
Daisies long have closed their eyes;
 Lullaby !
Calm, how calm ! on all things lies;
 Lullaby !

Sleep, then sleep ! my heart's delight;
Sleep ! and through the darksome night,
Round thy bed God's angels bright,
 Lullaby !
Guard thee till I come with light;
 Lullaby !

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From the "Examiner."

The love of children few writers of our day have expressed with so much naïve fidelity as Mr. Bennett.

From the "Eclectic Review."

We confess, of all things small, we love babies; and we derive more poetical inspiration from baby-watchings and baby-nursings, than from any other class of sub-adorations; and we further confess, that we never met with more truthful descriptions of them than we find in this volume. Memory itself is not so faithful, though it is capable of appreciating the fidelity of the artist.

From Miss Mitford's "Recollections of a Literary Life."

Of all writers, the one who has best understood, best painted, best felt infant nature, is Mr. Bennett. We see at once that it is not only a charming and richly-gifted poet who is describing childish beauty, but a young father writing from his heart. "Baby May" is amongst the most popular of Mr. Bennett's lyrics, and amongst the most original, as that which is perfectly true to nature can hardly fail to be. The "Epitaphes for Infants" are of great sweetness and tenderness. "The Seasous" would make four charming pictures.

From the "Leader."

Here we find the sweet song of "Baby's Shoes," which has been so frequently quoted with enthusiastic recognition.

From the "Atlas."

Would you have a poem on domestic subjects, on the love between parent and child? How charmingly is that brought out in the little poem entitled "Baby's Shoes"!

From the "Daily Telegraph."

"Baby's Shoes" is worthy to rank with "Baby May," which, from its completeness and finished charm as a picture of infancy, is one of the most exquisite among the whole of Mr. Bennett's productions.

From the "Weekly Dispatch."

Some of his poems on children are among the most charming in the language, and are familiar in a thousand homes.

From the "Illustrated Times."

The poems about children (especially the charming one entitled "Baby's Shoes") are as good as anything of the kind that has ever been written.

From "Chambers's Edinburgh Journal."

In Mr. Bennett's descriptions, we seem to hear the very jerk of the cradle breaking the sweet monotony of the mother's song. Perhaps some of our readers may be even yet unacquainted with our old favourite "Baby May," in which case we could scarcely do them a pleasanter piece of service than by extracting it. It is a poem with which every woman, and every man with a heart within him, is charmed at the first reading, quite apart from its perfectness as a work of art, though it bears criticism of the strictest kind. Who but a real poet could have made such a subject as the following ("Baby's Shoes") awaken thoughts at least deep enough for tears? Have Waller or Shenstone ever written anything, in the same manner, more admirable than these two "Epitaphs for Infants."

From the "Morning Star."

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From the "Illustrated News of the World."

We defy any parent, whose heart is not thoroughly steeled against all emotion, to read the piece entitled "Baby's Shoes," without a swelling of the bosom and moistened eyes. These poems will be treasured by many a father and mother as spells to revive the image of that sorrow, from which they would not willingly be divorced, for the little ones in heaven, and, by happier parents, as aids to the utterance of their hopes and joys in the presence of their children, when heaven lies about them in their infancy.

From the "Guardian."

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From the "Weekly Dispatch."

Mr. W. C. Bennett is a poet of great power, and possessing a fine descriptive faculty, especially when employed on subjects of a picturesqus, rural character. Some of his poems on children, too, are among the most charming in the language, and are familiar in a thousand homes. The longest poem in this book is "Queen Eleanor's Vengeance," a terrible tale, related with commensurate force. "Pygmalion" is an ambitious strain, finely conceived and executed. Mr. Bennett has produced a charming and graceful book.

From the "Guardian."

Mr. Bennett writes with practised skill, and what is more remarkable in these days, with unimpeachable taste. He is a man of taste and ability, who will yield pleasure and interest to every one who reads him.

From "Fraser's Magazine."

It is impossible to deny the genuine pictorial power of the mind from which this description, that might stand for a translation into words of Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," in our National Gallery, proceeds Perhaps a famous song of Shelley's may have been echoing in Mr. Bennett's brain when he wrote this "Summer Invocation"; but no one that was not a true poet could have reproduced the echo with such a sweet melody, and such delicate touches of his own. Altogether, Mr. Bennett's volume appears to us full of promise.

From the "Athenaeum."

Many a tender thought and charming fancy find graceful utterance in his pages.

From the "Examiner."

Mr. W. C. Bennett shares with Dr. Mackay the right to be popular on the score of simple unaffected utterance. In his new volume we like the natural tone of the "New Griselda" better than the ballad style—less suited to the writer's genius—of the "Queen Eleanor's Vengeance," after which the book is named. But there is everywhere unexaggerated expression, a pleasant sense of the joy of the primrose-bank, of blooming thorn-trees, and of summer rain; and there is occasional expression of that love of children, which few writers of our day have expressed with so much naive fidelity as Mr. Bennett.

From the "National Magazine."

Another volume has proceeded from the pen of Mr. W. C. Bennett. It is entitled "Queen Eleanor's Vengeance, and other Poems." Amongst these there are strains that bring Tennyson and Browning to mind, without abating our respect for the immediate author. The ballad which initiates the collection is written in stanza-couplets, and shows a power of dealing with the elements of the terrible, perhaps not suspected by the author's admirers. On the Fair Rosamond he dwells but little; the vindictive feelings of the jealous Eleanor are those that have plainly fascinated the poet's genius. A dramatic poem, entitled "A Character," manifests the same tendency. The Creole, Lina Merton, is a Queen Eleanor on a small scale, and of a more metaphysical turn of mind; but her vengeance is equally cruel or rather more so. The Queen only murders, but the Creole annihilates. The piece, however, most to our mind is "The Boat Race." The "New Griselda," which is evidently the writer's favourite, has less of pure beauty, and the conventions introduced

disturb the ideal impressions. Mr. Bennett's classic imitations are, as usual, excellent. Theocritus writes again in such pieces as "Pygmalion," "Ariadne," and "The Judgment of Midas." The political pieces are vigorous, satirical, and fully justify the reputation already acquired by the author for compositions of the kind. But it is in his domestic moods that we best love to encounter Mr. Bennett. Is not the following ("Baby's Shoes") exquisite? Among the more ambitious efforts, we may note with especial commendation the poems entitled "Columbus" and "The Star of the Ballet." The last is a ballad in which simplicity, thought and sentiment, wrestle for the victory, and lovingly unite, as it were, in a war embrace.

Price One Shilling.

WAR SONGS.

From the "Athenæum."

In the "War Songs" of W. C. Bennett, we recognize a poet who has frequently merited and received our commendation. He is a writer who has always preferred sense to sound. An earnest student of the poetic art as applicable to the commonplaces of life, and the events of the passing day, he has dealt with fugitive themes, but in a manner that will relieve his songs and sagas from the epithet. His style, too, is his own; strong and vigorous, never formal. His words are, for the most part, Saxon. Such is the character of Mr. Bennett's genius. It is eminently patriotic also; and these "War Songs," both in their themes and treatment, come "as natural to him as eating and drinking"; he had but to let his heart speak, and they existed. "Occasional" poems are generally artificial; with Mr. Bennett they are but opportunities for spontaneous utterance.

From the "Examiner."

There is spirit and true instinct for poetry in these "War Songs."

From the "Weekly Dispatch."

These Songs have vigour and fire about them.

From the "Dublin University Magazine."

These Songs have this great merit, that they are written in strong, vigorous, manly English.

From the "Morning Advertiser,"

Full of feeling, melody, and fire.

